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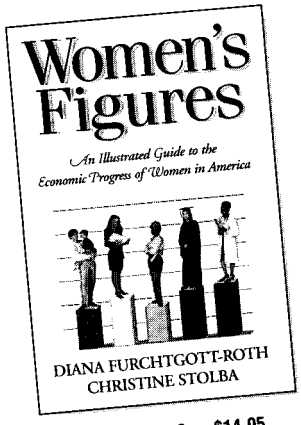

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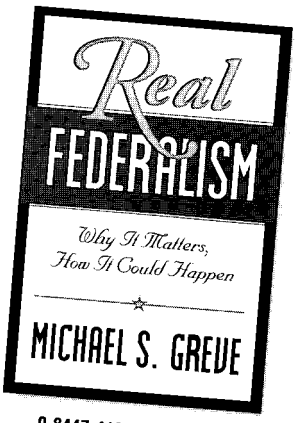

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A National Magazine of Politics, Business, and Culture

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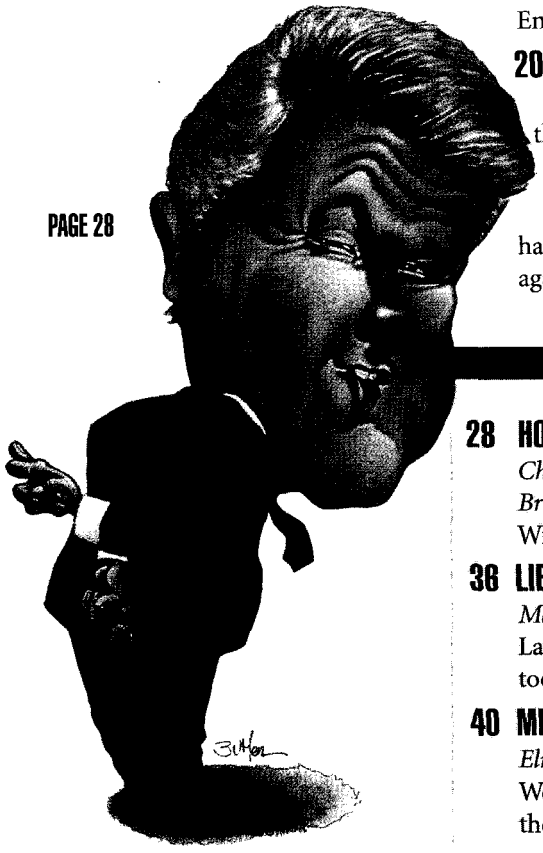

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THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

A NATIONAL MAGAZINE OF POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

MAY/JUNE 1999 VOL. 10, NO. 3

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POSTMASTER: Send all subscription correspondence and address changes to The American Enterprise, P.O. Box 7144, Bensenville, IL 60106-7144. THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE (ISSN 1047-3572), published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1998, the American Enterprise Institute. All rights reserved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
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1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036,
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PRODUCTION AND BUSINESS OFFICE
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1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
(202) 862-5886.

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Bird's Eye

KARL ZINSMEISTER

Propaganda in America?

"Truth is something outside yourself, something to be discovered, and not...something you can make up as you go along." —George Orwell, 1944

"There are no facts."—Michel Foucault, 1968

Lying is ancienter than Croesus, as old as humanity itself. But there is something new about lying today—something in the way it is viewed and received.

Writing about the disgraceful prevarications flowing from the White House of late, Christopher Hitchens suggests that what ought to trouble us even more than the dishonesties is "the praise and approbation that certain lies now receive from the wised-up." (More from him on page 28.)

The change in the way lies are received in certain quarters is captured in the two quotations above. They illustrate how conceptions of truth shifted from the time of the World War II generation to the time of the Vietnam generation. In the first epigraph, Orwell expresses the longstanding Western respect for objective truth that has undergirded everything from our religion to our science. In the second statement, Foucault proclaims the so-called "postmodern" view so fashionable in intellectual circles today—which insists there is no truth, that what we call "truths" are just claims made up by the powerful to justify the continuation of their power.

If you find Foucault's statement loopy, and doubt that many people could actually believe such a thing, you are probably a sensible person who needs to pay closer attention to recent news developments. Consider, for a start, the recent case of Rigoberta Menchu. Ms. Menchu is the Guatemalan woman who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 for her autobiographical account of her family's mistreatment by the Guatemalan army during that nation's civil war. Political radicals consider Menchu—a Mayan, a peasant, an activist, a woman—to be today's "preeminent Third World witness." There is only one problem: the central details in her heart-rending autobiography are bald-faced fabrications (see page 43).

O.K., the Nobel committee and the rest of the world were duped. That happens. But with the real truth now having come to light—and no one disputes that Menchu's book is full of falsehoods—surely the professors and politicians who previously celebrated her will set the record straight, right? Wrong.

The appalling fact is, activists and garden variety academics are falling all over themselves to excuse and rationalize Menchu's lies. "Faculty members...say it doesn't matter if the facts in the book are wrong, because they believe Ms. Menchu's story speaks to a greater truth about the oppression of poor people in Central America," reports the *Chronicle of Higher Education* after interviewing many U.S. academics. "Even if she didn't watch her little brother being murdered, the military did murder people in Guatemala," reasons Wellesley professor Marjorie Agosin. "Indian people speak collectively...she expressed the voice of the collective conscience," explains Communist intellectual Arturo Taracena to the *New York Review of Books*. To impose Western standards of honesty on indigenous people, you see, is racist imperialism.

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THOSE WHO CORRUPT THE PUBLIC MIND ARE JUST AS EVIL AS THOSE WHO STEAL FROM THE PUBLIC PURSE.

Confronted with the evidence of her misstatements, Menchu claimed the right to redefine reality. "*My truth* is that my brother was burned alive," she told the *Washington Post*. Re-categorizing her book as "testimony, not a biography," she insisted that it is "a window on the truth for all victims." Menchu's publisher Verso, far from repudiating their exposed author, echoed her party line on the book, in masterful doublespeak: "We think it is a very accurate statement of how things appeared to this young woman."

This easily placated Menchu's "multiculturalist" fans. As one defender wrote in the *Washington Post*, "if it takes an 'exaggerated version' of one woman's autobiography to put her issue on the international agenda, then so be it."

Not everyone reacted as these true believers did, of course. professor Daphne Patai objected that "Rigoberta Menchu is not admired as a creative writer. She is admired as the embodiment of a certain struggle. For her to be compromised is not O.K., anymore than if we found that the diary of Anne Frank was written by her father."

Menchu's unmasking put author Joanne Omang in mind of an earlier betrayal of truth that had troubled her:

> When I was a *Washington Post* correspondent in Argentina in the mid-1970s, a London newsletter reported that leftist guerrillas had marched through a certain Buenos Aires suburb while residents tossed flowers from the balconies. I knew this had never happened and canceled my subscription. The editor called to argue. He said it was "political truth": If the guerrillas had marched, the residents, secret supporters all, would certainly have tossed flowers.

This same license to lie for ideological reasons was used several years ago by partisans in the Tawana Brawley case. Brawley, you will recall, was a New York teenager who claimed to have been raped by a gang of white men. After Al Sharpton and other rabblerousers turned her accusation into a *cause célèbre* and defamed specific men as the attackers, a court determined that Brawley had made up the tale to avoid being punished for staying out all night. But the really startling thing was that Sharpton and the other race agitators refused to give up the grievance or retract their slanders even after Brawley's claim evaporated. "It doesn't matter whether the crime occurred or not," argued Stanley Diamond in *The Nation*, since it represents "what actually happens to too many black women."

This preference for a notion of collective guilt or innocence over real-life facts motivated some of Anita Hill's fans as well. In a 1992 book edited by Toni Morrison, feminist Homi Bhabha urged that "Anita Hill must be believed not because she was personally speaking the truth, but because her affective language is symptomatic of the collective 'sexual condition' of working women." (This example and many others can be found in Lynne Cheney's excellent book on this subject, *Telling the Truth*.)

Back in 1993, journalists Christopher Ruddy and Jeffrey Goldberg caught some award-winning filmmakers in an egregious lie. The producers had made a PBS documentary called "Liberators" which purported to tell the tale of all-black U.S. Army units that had freed the inmates of Buchenwald and Dachau in 1945. The movie was promoted coast to coast, distributed to junior and senior high schools, and trumpeted loudly by both black groups like the Rainbow Coalition and Jewish groups like New York City's Community Relations Council—in an effort to generate a black-Jewish political alliance. "What we're trying to do is make New York a better place for you and me to live," explained Peggy Tishman, one of the Jewish backers. When told of the producers' willful fabrications she suggested the documentary's accuracy should not be an issue; the important thing is bringing Jews and blacks into "dialogue." "There are a lot of truths that are very necessary. This is not a truth that's necessary," she asserted.

The problem is, once that particular gate is open, everyone wants to use it—fudging or completely re-writing truth in order to further their own favorite causes. Young feminist Katie Roiphe collected examples of this from "Take Back the Night" marches—popular events on college campuses where activists offer public testimonies of sexual assaults. One detailed accusation was fabricated by a Princeton student who later explained, "I made my statements...in order to raise awareness for the plight of campus rape victims." A woman at George Washington University who entered a false charge said similarly, "My goal from the beginning was to call attention to what I perceived to be a serious safety concern for women."

Lynne Cheney describes an incident at Vassar College where several male students were charged and then found innocent of date rape. Afterward, assistant dean Catherine Comins declared of the men: "They have a lot of pain, but it is not a pain I would necessarily have spared them. I think it ideally initiates a process of self-exploration. 'How do I see women?' 'If I didn't violate her, could I have?' 'Do I have the potential to do to her what they say I did?'"

Two University of Pennsylvania instructors explicitly justify such strategies in the *Journal of Social History*. "We are all engaged in writing a kind of propaganda," they insist. "Rather than believe in the absolute truth of what we are writing, we must believe in the moral or political position we are taking with it."

This same claim to a right to lie was made by filmmaker Oliver Stone in a 1992 talk in New York City. When a fellow panelist challenged the facts in one of his films Stone answered, "Even if I am totally wrong.... I am still right.... I am essentially right because I am depicting the Evil with a capital *E*."

It is almost impossible to overstate how deeply this kind of thinking has seeped into left-wing intellectual life over the last

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THE LIE ON THE LIPS BECOMES THE LIE IN THE SOUL.

generation, starting from strongholds on college campuses and then trickling down into other corners of society. "Among college professors, 'truth' remains within quotation marks, and we reap the whirlwind," mourns English professor and *TAE* contributor Edward Ericson.

One very current example of this involves Marxist academic Mike Davis, who has written two influential books on American cities that were recently discovered to contain myriad inaccuracies and outright fabrications. Did this spark a backlash among Davis's fellow academics? To the contrary, it was mostly ink-stained journalists who raised an uproar, while the professoriate circled the wagons around their offender. (In fact, Davis has just been given a plum professorship in New York.) The whistleblowers "obsess on the minutiae of 'factual' information," complains Joseph Heathcott of Indiana University in a recent Internet posting. More important, he argues, is the usefulness of Davis's "metaphors." Even if his books are founded on falsehoods, Davis has a right to propagate "his particular vision of L.A.—which is his alone."

"Postmodern" thinkers unabashedly claim the right to concoct their own personal definitions of reality and falsehood, of truth and lie. Sometimes, this is just silly—as when they insist that things like one's sex or the laws of physics are just "social constructs." Other times, this becomes a dangerous license for disruptive propaganda or sociopathic behavior.

Certainly the intellectuals who laid the groundwork for today's truth-denying postmodernists were an anti-social lot. Philosophical godfathers Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger inspired proponents of both Communism and Fascism (indeed, Heidegger was a Nazi enthusiast). Michel Foucault was a sado-masochist who achieved sexual *frisson* by inflicting pain and wrote books celebrating mass murder. Jacques Derrida was an intentional obscurer and abuser of language in just the ways George Orwell warned us were dangerous.

Prior to becoming a celebrated Yale professor Paul de Man was a Nazi collaborator in Belgium, and he was a habitual, serial liar and manipulator throughout his life. As David Lehman (who is featured later in this magazine) helped uncover, de Man falsified his resume, skipped out on personal debts, abandoned his sick wife and three young sons, abused the trust of friends, and repeatedly evaded truth and responsibility. Mary McCarthy described him as possessing "an intelligence that's outdistanced his morals." His eldest son compares him to a confidence man. As one very old text puts it, ye shall know them by their fruits.

Of course, it's one thing to have a confidence man whose intelligence has outdistanced his morals in the Yale French department, and quite another to have him in a place like the White House. Bill Clinton is hardly our first President to lie. But he is certainly our first President to lie with so much fervor, frequency, and indecent earnestness. Mr. Clinton doesn't just dodge and weave in public in the usual political fashion. He is a virtuoso deceiver of everyone around him. He lies about trivial things as well as consequential matters. He piles lies upon lies. What has been variously referred to as his "want of candor," his "economy with the truth," his "situational veracity" will go down in history as his distinguishing characteristic as President. Just putting together the sampling of his lies that appears on pages 32-35 became a big job.

One of the first policy innovations of the Clintonites was their "don't ask, don't tell" plan for sheltering gays in the military, and the "don't tell" part quickly became the *modus operandi* for the whole administration. At one point, Mike McCurry explained that the White House strategy would be to "tell the truth slowly." But not even this was done. In the Lewinsky case, for instance, journalist Michael Kelly points out that the President first lied under oath in a judicial proceeding, then lied again when given a chance to correct that lie in a second judicial proceeding, then persisted in lying *after* that, never conceding his deceptions.

Any fair-minded person can understand how Mr. Clinton might have made one of his initial mistakes. What's hard to fathom, and impossible to accept, is the way he subsequently added dishonesty to dishonesty, steadfastly refusing to ever come clean, never waking up in the morning with an irresistible urge to confess, express contrition, and take honorable responsibility. Instead he heaped up more and more deceptions until even the *Washington Post* spluttered, "it is difficult to find a single honest sentence" in his arguments.

And the Lewinsky debacle was only the latest in a long string of lies. Very early in Clinton's administration, even liberal journalists like Bob Herbert were warning of "Mr. Clinton's more or less fluid conception of what's real." Joe Klein wrote that "With the Clintons, the story *always* is subject to further revision." One of the very first Clinton bumper stickers already had him figured out: "Bill Clinton: 99% Fact-Free!"

This long history—dating right back to the lies about Gennifer Flowers, draft dodging, and marijuana inhaling in his first presidential campaign—is why it's now so annoying to hear former Clinton aides like George Stephanopoulos, Dee Dee Myers, Mike McCurry, and Robert Reich express Olympian shock—*shock*—at what a perfidious guy they've discovered their former boss to be. Those reactions are themselves lies. Anyone paying any attention at all to Bill Clinton could see virtually from his first days on the public stage that he had a tortured relationship with the truth. Try to convince us that Stephanopoulos, McCurry, and company weren't active collaborators and enablers in the many lies told to quash "bimbo-eruptions," the lies about the health care task force that so enraged Judge Royce Lamberth, the commodities-trading coverup, and on and on over seven long, sordid years.

The truth is, the President's assistants have been almost as instrumental as their boss in elevating the role of falsehood in the White House. Paul Begala's first rule of politics, Bob Woodward tells us, is "Define and create the reality that you want." Never worry about facts; project an image to the public. This is pure postmodernism, the very same impulse that moved a liter-

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AMONG PROFESSORS, "TRUTH" REMAINS IN QUOTATION MARKS, AND WE REAP THE WHIRLWIND.

ature professor to say that "reality is what is accepted as reality, what is useful," and that postmodern man aims "not to discover reality but to manipulate it."

Some readers will remember the day Sidney Blumenthal testified before the grand jury in February 1998, and then emerged to hold a press conference on the courthouse steps, declaring he could hardly believe he was living in America.

> Today I was forced to answer questions about my conversations, as part of my job, with, and I wrote this down, the *New York Times*, CNN, CBS, *Time* magazine, *U.S. News*, the New York *Daily News*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Observer*, and there may have been a few others I don't remember right now. Ken Starr's prosecutors demanded to know what I had told reporters, and what reporters had told me.

The press lapped up this "martyr to freedom of the press" act, and the event became one of the crucial moments in establishing the stereotype of Judge Starr as out of control and dangerous. The problem is, it was a shameless lie. Blumenthal seems to have assumed the transcript would never be made public. But of course it was, and, as Christopher Hitchens summarizes, Blumenthal "wasn't asked any of those questions, let alone 'forced to answer' them." Rather he was asked about "talking points" the White House had circulated to discredit Monica Lewinsky, and Blumenthal answered:

> If reporters called me or I spoke with reporters, I would tell them to call the [Democratic National Committee] to get those talking points. And those included news organizations ranging from CNN, CBS, ABC, *New York Times*, New York *Daily News*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Observer*, *Los Angeles Times*.

This was the only moment in Blumenthal's testimony where a list of news organizations was mentioned, so if he "wrote them down" he was, as Hitchens points out, taking notes on his own actions, not some inquisitor's. When Blumenthal was called back to testify again, the forewoman of the grand jury chastised him, "We are very concerned about the fact that during your last visit an inaccurate representation of the events that happened was retold on the steps of the courthouse."

In other words, Blumenthal lied about the Independent Counsel's actions and his own in order to create a phony portrayal of himself, and the White House generally, as victims of undemocratic crusading. And this lie stuck in the public mind. (We later found out that Blumenthal also planted in the press Clinton's defamation of Lewinsky as a "stalker.")

These are not new tricks, but old (and rather scary) tricks brought for the first time to a new place—our White House. In preparing for this issue I read a classic work on propaganda written by Frenchman Jacques Ellul. The experience was a little disturbing.

Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels was a brilliant man with a Ph.D in literature and history, and many of his ideas will sound very familiar to contemporary ears. He counseled propagandists to go beyond crude lying and employ different kinds of truth: half truths, limited truths, truths out of context. The propagandist must reserve the right to define his own terms, he insisted. And "when it would be dangerous to let a fact be known, the modern propagandist prefers to hide it, to say nothing rather than to lie." About one-fifth of all press directives given by Goebbels between 1939 and 1944 were actually just orders to keep silent on one subject or another, Ellul reports. (Shades of Hillary's billing records and the Juanita Broaddrick non-response.)

Goebbels sounds most contemporary when he says (Begala-like) that "We do not talk to say something, but to obtain a certain effect." And the propagandist doesn't worry about being consistent; claims can even be contradictory for different audiences. Goebbels, for example, promised farmers he would increase the price of bread at the same time he was telling city dwellers he would decrease it. This is a favorite Clinton tactic—telling Texas businessmen their taxes are too high while promising liberals he'll defeat tax cuts, informing homosexuals that he is for gay marriage and listeners on Christian talk radio that he is against it, and so forth, *ad infinitum*. (See Christopher Hitchens's rich example on page 28, where Dee Dee Myers is denying the Gennifer Flowers tape is real at the same time she's apologizing for what Clinton says on it.)

Bill Clinton has startled many of us by practicing the famous dictum of Hitler himself: The bigger the lie, the more chance it will be believed. That was exactly his tactic in turning to the camera, saying "I want you to listen to me," wagging his finger, and then exclaiming indignantly, "I did not have sex with that woman." That statement was delivered with such passionate, shameless intensity that most of us who saw it assumed there must be something wrong with Monica Lewinsky's story. Even if you didn't trust or like Clinton, he couldn't be psycho enough to say that, in that way, if it weren't true. Could he?

Actually, as Ellul told us back in 1962, that is exactly how a good propagandist works:

> Because political problems are difficult and often confusing, and their significance and their import not obvious, the propagandist can easily present them in *moral* language—and here we leave the realm of fact, to enter into that of passion. Facts, then, come to be discussed in the language of *indignation*, a tone which is almost always the mark of propaganda.

"The propagandist must insist on the purity of his own intentions and, at the same time, hurl accusations at his enemy," says Ellul. This, of course, is where the Clintonites succeeded most brilliantly—in their demonization of first Ken Starr and then the congressional Republicans.

"In today's intellectual climate, the person who reveals the truth...receives the blame, while the one whose lies are re-

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vealed becomes more popular than ever," observes Ed Veith, one of this issue's contributors. This has recently happened not only to Starr and the G.O.P. but also to the individuals who blew the whistle on Rigoberta Menchu and Mike Davis. And these verdicts were not accidents of public opinion but the product of determined campaigns of vilification.

Shamelessness can provide a great tactical advantage in turning around public disapproval. Time and again Bill Clinton gets away with whoppers that more cautious and truthful people would be too terrified even to launch. Literally *two days* after a credible woman gravely revealed on national television that he had left her in need of an ice pack after a sexual assault, the President was on the airwaves announcing "$223 million in grants to help detect and stop violence against women." Abusers must be held accountable, he had the nerve to tell us.

Similarly, recall Clinton's immediate response when he and Al Gore got caught in egregious violations of current campaign finance laws: They defiantly argued there was no "controlling legal authority" to stop them, then unblushingly made political hay on the theme of how dreadful campaign finance violations are. Finally, they called sanctimoniously for additional, stricter laws—after having spent the previous two years massively abusing the current ones! Breathtaking.

An even more tawdry example of Clinton shamelessness came in his recent State of the Union address, when he manipulated public sympathy for his betrayed wife by peering up at her in the balcony and in his best throat-lump style telling the millions watching: "I honor her"—followed by an ostentatious mouthing of "I love you" for the cameras. Bill Bennett described this as a classic "Clintonism, a term that may well enter our popular vocabulary, meaning 'to tell a fantastic lie in public, accompanied by the appearance of heartfelt sincerity.'"

To understand these kinds of behaviors you have to leave the universe of politics and veer into psychology. The President admitted to Monica Lewinsky (as she divulged in her Barbara Walters interview) that he's been a serial liar since childhood. (Which made them quite a pair, since Lewinsky has stated openly that she was reared by her mother on a regime of lying.) Modern dereliction in the raising of children is the other big source of today's lying boomlet—as Christina Hoff Sommers, Ray Wisher, and others discuss in this issue.

Michael Kelly suggests the President has an "essential character flaw" that is even *deeper* than his dishonesty. Kelly dubs it "ahonesty." He explains that "Clinton means what he says when he says it, but tomorrow he will mean what he says when he says the opposite. He is the existential President, living with absolute sincerity in the passing moment." Clinton's mother, Kelly notes, taught him that "people are not to be judged by their actions, but are endlessly free to reinvent themselves, to be whatever the moment demands." He quotes from her autobiography where she explained, "The past is irrelevant.... Whatever's in someone's past is past, and I don't need to know about it.... When bad things do happen, I brainwash myself to put them out of my mind."

There is a certain brassy impressiveness to the way the Clinton White House has wielded the tricks of propaganda to win political battles. But there is also great danger to the nation. The problem with importing propaganda techniques into democratic politics is that they quickly lead to a thoroughly false and *un*democratic politics. Ellul concluded from his studies that, once launched, the propaganda process tends to become irreversible, and he warned that no one can give himself over to propagandizing, even in a "good cause," without being damaged in the process. As a British observer cautioned years ago, "the lie on the lips becomes the lie in the soul."

We note in this issue that for four decades now there have been intellectual trends underway which blur truth and encourage lying. We see the results in universities, in politics, in professions like the law, in popular entertainment and the media, even in places like business. The latest annual report released by investor Warren Buffett, a carefully watched indicator in the financial world, warns that misrepresentations and accounting gimmicks are becoming a serious problem in the investment sector. "Many major corporations still play things straight, but a significant and growing number of otherwise high-grade managers...have come to the view that it's O.K." to "manipulate numbers and deceive investors." Buffett continues, "These managers often say that...in using accounting shenanigans to get the figures they want, they are only doing what everybody else does. Once such an everybody's-doing-it attitude takes hold, ethical misgivings vanish."

Clinton's most damaging legacy will be the hard forward shove he has given this trend toward selective truth-telling. He has, as George Will puts it, cultivated American indifference to the facts. You could see this in microcosm in the impeachment votes: As the evidence was laid out, Senator Robert Byrd stated he had "no doubt" the President "lied under oath" and believed he also "did indeed obstruct justice." Senator Charles Schumer said, "It is clear that the President lied." Congressman Robert Wexler observed, "The President lied under oath.... His actions are indefensible." Yet when it came to vote, none of these men stood for punishment. Clinton had successfully cultivated their indifference to the fact of his guilt.

The President has corrupted millions of Americans into putting their logic and their evidence-sorting abilities into the service of ideology rather than truth. He has made it an article of the liberal faith that the desirability of telling the truth now depends upon a host of secondary factors, like whom you are talking to, and whether or not he shares your "causes." The usually principled John Judis actually wrote in *The New Republic* in March that "being truthful is an act defined by its context and not simply by its informative content." This kind of effort to fuzzify and bend the meaning of honesty and truth-telling is tragic, and we can thank Bill Clinton for seating such reasoning deep in the public psyche.

Adlai Stevenson, a paragon of the American liberalism that reigned before postmodernism began its corrosive work, once said that "those who corrupt the public mind are just as evil as those who steal from the public purse." I'm betting that if he were alive today, he'd say they're worse.

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Sidelights

Kenya has an official government committee investigating the Y2K problem; its report is due in April 2000. ❧ More than one company now makes fortune cookies for dogs. Fortunes include, "You can lead a master to the door, but you can't take him for a walk" and "You'll never meet a fire hydrant you won't like." ❧ **Monica Lewinsky** told London's *Sunday Mirror* she's proud of the book *Monica's Story*: "I like to be able to reach up on my book shelf for one of **Shakespeare**'s plays, and I would like to think that people will do that with this book." ❧ The Media Research Center counted network news reports in the five days following **Anita Hill**'s accusations against **Clarence Thomas**, versus the five days following **Juanita Broaddrick**'s rape charge against **Clinton**: 67 to two. On TV morning shows, the gap was 84 to two. ··· Upset when a reporter called him a "rapist recluse," boxer **Mike Tyson** replied, "I'm not a recluse." ❧ The Center for the Study of the States reports that 1998 saw the 50 states' tax cuts exceed their tax increases by $5.3 billion, yet state tax revenues still grew 6.9 percent over the previous year ··· "Welfare reform has generated a $4.7 billion windfall for the states," the *Washington Post* observes, due to "swift, steep declines in the nation's public assistance rolls." ❧ Federal laws have long forced cars and trucks to be outfitted with catalytic converters to prevent smog, but the Environmental Protection Agency has discovered the converters produce nitrous oxide, an extremely potent greenhouse gas whose emissions are rising sharply. ❧ Public Agenda polled high-schoolers across the nation and found three-quarters said they would learn more if teachers pushed them harder ❧ Minneapolis lawyer **Marshall Tanick** puts Independent Counsel **Ken Starr**'s expensive investigation in perspective: "Just think: A plaintiff's attorney in the tobacco litigation would have to work close to a week, with short lunch breaks, to earn that much." ··· A new field for lawsuit-chasers: A Pennsylvania man sued God in federal court for failing (1) to return his youth and (2) to supply him with sufficient guitar-playing skills. ❧ Nebraska Attorney General **Don Stenberg** wants his state to join 26 others that treat the killing of an unborn child by criminals—drunk drivers, rapists, etc.—as a form of homicide. ❧ The *Forward* recently reported that "Jewish community relations council leaders are significantly more liberal than the communities they are supposed to be representing on public policy matters," such as separation of church and state, affirmative action, and government size.

University of California-Santa Cruz has a course in "Feminist Cyborg Fiction," including stories about a "lesbian-of-color" vampire, columnist **Don Feder** chuckles. ❧ Median household income of Harley-Davidson motorcycle buyers: $73,600. ❧ If the $2,000 IRA contribution limit had been indexed for inflation, the *Wall Street Journal* notes, it would be $5,350 today.

❧ New bumper sticker: "Where Will You Spend Eternity…Smoking or Non-smoking?" ❧ In 1994-95, women earned 21 percent more bachelor's degrees than men, and 23 percent more master's degrees, reports the National Center for Education Statistics. ··· In 1998, 62 percent of mothers with children under three had jobs, up from 52 percent in 1988, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports. ··· A *Good Housekeeping* poll found 74 percent of mothers say "super mom" is history ❧ A federal appeals court ruled that two Alaskan landlords may refuse to rent to unmarried couples for religious reasons. ❧ **Rodney King**, arrested many times since his infamous 1991 beating, has been charged in recent weeks with spousal battery, child abuse, and vandalism. ❧ *Esquire* sneers that *Saving Private Ryan* deserves "the **Leni Riefenstahl** Award for Rabid Nationalism": "Reverent of authority, contemptuous of dissent," it's "the kind of film the Germans would've made if they'd won the war." ··· As **Clinton** began bombing Kosovo, Serb TV broadcast the movie *Wag the Dog*. ··· Serb protesters held signs reading, "Clinton: Make Sex, Not War." ··· **Manik Bokchalian** became a U.S. citizen at 117. Asked if she'd "bear arms for this country," she replied, "I fought against the Turks; I will fight against anyone who comes to me." ··· In fiscal '98, persons in the National Guard and the Reserves served 13.3 million man-days, up from 5.3 million in 1992. ··· "We can have the future we deserve because we already have the President we deserve," **Al Gore** recently told a Buffalo crowd. ❧ "Put your heart into gambling," exhorts Fitness Gaming Corp., maker of the "Pedal 'n' Play" exercise-cycle and the "Money Mill" treadmill, both wired so "you can't gamble unless you're peddling and you can't peddle unless you're gambling." —*SW*

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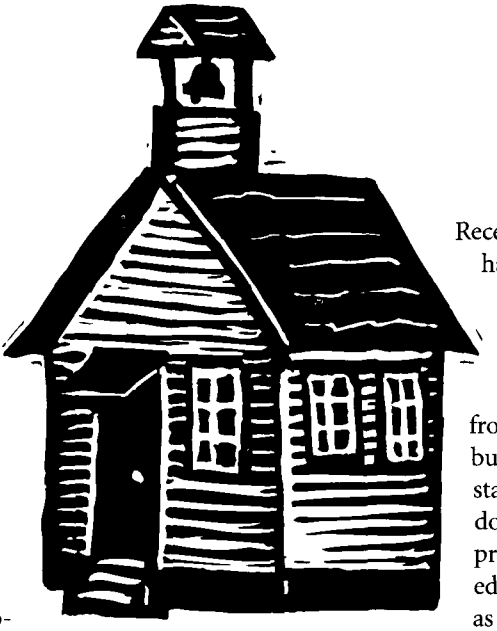
SCAN



GET SMARTER ON SCHOOL REFORM

When the issue is education—and in politics these days, it often is—conservative pols need to come up with something more than school choice to talk about. True, choice would be a godsend in many urban areas. And it is one of the most humane and public-spirited proposals that Republicans are now pushing—because the biggest beneficiaries would be underclass children and families, who typically live in low-income urban districts that give almost no support to Republicans. (Only 18 percent of *all* urbanites nationwide voted for Republicans in the last election.)

But in tying all their education wagons to the choice horse, conservatives have let Bill Clinton outflank them politically. Thus we had the political oddity of congressional Republicans expending most of their education energies in 1998 in an attempt to win school choice for the District of Columbia, a region more hostile to conservative politicians than any other in the country. Bill Clinton crushed the GOP effort, with nobody of political consequence becoming angry at him, or grateful to the Republicans for making the effort.

Meanwhile, most rural and suburban voters, the Republican base, are reasonably satisfied with their schools. In many cases, these voters picked their current homes—often enduring long commutes and other disadvantages—specifically so they could have access to the local school. To them, school choice can sound a lot like a way of importing other districts' problems into their own.

Conservatives ought to continue to push school choice because (1) it is the right thing to do for America's most ill-educated children, and (2) it has long-run potential to break up the overall educational mediocrity that is encouraged when government monopolizes schooling. But at the same time they need to recognize that for many voters, the school choice issue is moot (rural families like mine often have no nearby alternatives), or unappealing (for suburbanites who don't want their children going elsewhere).

A more effective appeal to these citizens would include proposals like loosening the stranglehold the teachers' unions have on whom we hire as instructors, making it easier to fire incompetent teachers, and releasing local school districts from the snarl of government red tape that prevents them from innovating. Republicans also ought to propose radical changes in the ways teachers are trained, textbooks selected, and curricula written. And there should be more hard numbers on student performance produced on a school-by-school basis so parents can better judge how well their local institutions are actually doing.

Recently the Republicans have shown some savvy in these things by passing their Ed-flex bill, which helps school districts get out from under some of the burdens of federal and state regulations. If they don't make more progress in this direction, education could become as much of a stumbling block for conservative electoral chances as Social Security was in years past.

*—**Blake Hurst** is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

WE KNOW IT HELPS THEM

After noting that educational research doesn't find clear benefits in class-size reduction, Education Intelligence Agency director Mike Antonucci points out that this doesn't mean California's $4 billion class-size reduction program hasn't made any difference. "There is one result that cannot be denied: the California teachers' [union] has exactly 37,584 more members than it had three years ago." For Democratic politicians, that alone makes it worth every penny.

AMERICANS WITH BAD ATTITUDES ACT

Nicholas Panagopoulos is one more satisfied customer of the Americans with Disabilities Act—the George Bush-birthed monster that has given everyone from blind truckdrivers to deaf phone operators to disruptive high school students a license to sue employers, instructors, small businesses, and so forth.

Panagopoulos doesn't look handicapped. Not in any way. He scored 1410 on the SAT, placing him in the top couple percent in the nation. He was a National Merit Scholarship finalist. Both these accomplishments occurred without receiving any special accommodation during the tests.

But his attorneys recently assured a U.S. District Court judge that he is afflicted with a case of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder that makes it impossible for him to apply himself. They insist this makes it not only unfair but *illegal* for Phillips Andover Academy to flunk him out as it recently did.

After his parents informed the school he had been in therapy and on medication since he was five, Phillips allowed Panagopoulos extra time on some tests, forgave its third-year foreign language requirement, and otherwise made allowances. But the boarding school also told Panagopoulos to remove his stereo, telephone, and computer games from his

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dorm to help him improve his failing grades. He refused.

In the fall of 1998, Panagopoulos asked for reduced requirements in a religious philosophy class he was taking. Then he failed to hand in an important paper, after being warned repeatedly over three years that he could afford no more unsatisfactory grades. The faculty voted 168-2 to require him to withdraw from the private school. At which point his parents brought in the lawyers.

Phillips warns in court papers filed for the March trial that "Allowing a student to pick and choose only the portions of a syllabus he finds interesting enough to read, and hand in written assignments (or not) when it suits him, would fundamentally alter, not to mention lower, the Academy's stringent academic requirements."

No ruling had been made at press time.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS WEREN'T STAINLESS

If you're fretting over America's relative indifference to White House scandals, and think previous generations would have been reliably outraged by today's chicanery, we suggest you consult your history.

Start with Frederick Lewis Allen's 1931 classic, *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s,* which AEI researcher Ryan Holston recently brought to our attention.

Noting that the Harding administration turned out to be one of the most crooked ever, Allen asks "How did the American people take these disclosures? Did they rise in wrath to punish the offenders?"

Actually, no. "The harshest condemnation on the part of the press and the public was reserved" for those who "insisted on bringing the facts to light." In newspapers like the *New York Times,* there was anger over "the Democratic lynching-bee," and much complaining about "poison-tongued partisanship, pure malice, and twittering hysteria." The corruption inquiries were called "in plain words, contemptible and disgusting."

Other 1920s elements also sound familiar: "Testimony, coming out intermittently as it did, was confusing and hard to piece together; plain citizens could not keep clear in their minds such complicated facts…and the steady passage of time made the later investigations seem like a washing of very ancient dirty linen." So "resentment at the scandals and resentment at the scandal-mongers both gave way to a profound and untroubled apathy." Alas, the people's "idea of statesmanship on the part of the President was that he should let things alone, give industry and trade a chance to garner fat profits, and not 'rock the boat.'"

Public indifference to Washington scandal is an old American phenomena, apparently stemming from some basic conservative resistance to crusading. This has the frustrating effect of protecting scoundrels, but it is hardly a new 1990s symptom of American rot.

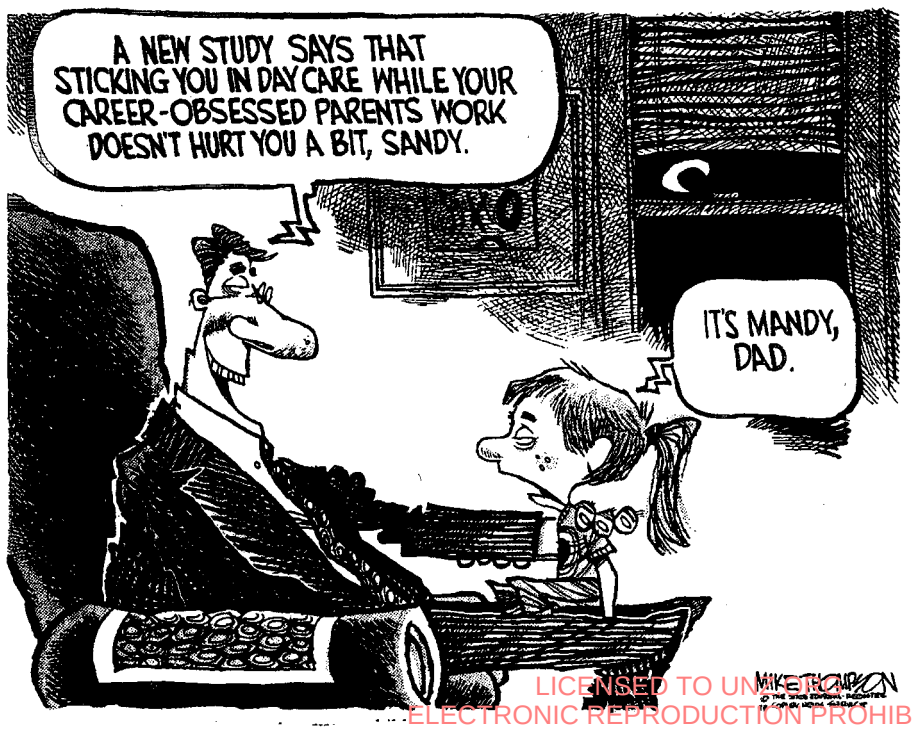
The good news: Over time President Harding's reputation "sank slowly and quietly lower." Soon, Allen writes, "It was not so easy...to compose panegyrics upon the public virtues of that good-natured man who had 'taught us the power of brotherliness.'"

GRAND ALLIANCE: CORRUPT UNIONS AND THE CLINTONITES

Arthur Coia is president of the Laborers Union of North America. The union's 300,000 members do lots of unglamorous work at construction sites and other workplaces, and pay hefty union dues for the privilege.

But while Coia represents working stiffs his own tastes are apparently rather aristocratic, for in 1991 he purchased a $450,000 Ferrari F40—in a quiet partnership with a company that just happens to do business with the union. No favors involved, of course. This came to light out of a Justice Department investigation into corruption in his union that resulted in 16 counts of financial and ethical wrongdoing, including charges that he consorted with mob figures and accepted kickbacks.

Recently, Coia was fined $100,000 for his Ferrari scam, but the 15 other charges were all dropped—thanks to a most convenient agreement with Janet Reno's Justice Department. Though the Laborer's Union has for years been under government scrutiny, Clinton's Justice officials agreed to let Mr. Coia himself run the corruption investigation and cleanup of his union. Lawyers representing the union's own executive board were allowed to handle the prosecution, and the hearing officer who ruled was also hired by the union. This cozy arrangement was set up (and the alternative of a federal racketeering complaint dropped) one month after Democratic National Chairman Terry McAuliffe listed Coia in an important memo to the White House as



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one of the DNC's "top ten supporters." President and Mrs. Clinton were cultivating a relationship with Coia at the very same time that prosecutors were pressuring him to resign, and the prosecutors lost.

This is part of a pattern of free passes the Clinton administration has handed to rotten unions. An egregious earlier example was Justice's kid-gloves treatment of Teamsters Union corruption under Ron Carey, which not only resulted in stolen union elections, misdirected member dues, and illegal Teamster involvement in Presidential elections, but also cost U.S. taxpayers several tens of millions of dollars in wasted oversight and union election costs. Carey, like Coia, was a major Democratic party backer, pre-eminent Clinton/Gore campaign donor, and confidante of the President himself.

THE VEEP IS A TRUTH-STRETCHER TOO

From a March 17, 1999 filing by Associated Press reporter Calvin Woodward:

When Vice President Al Gore opened his Iowa campaign this week, his privileged upbringing as the son of a senator was nowhere in sight. Instead, he talked about how he slopped hogs, drove mules, built homes, and cleared land—by hand and with a double-bladed ax, no less.

The man running for President was a boy who lived and was schooled in the rarefied air of Washington [he resided in the Fairfax Hotel and attended the elite St. Alban's academy], spending summers and congressional breaks on the family farm in Tennessee. But as far as Iowans could tell, it was all sweat and no refinement....

Gore goes into his presidential campaign with a thus-far small but nagging question—is he also one to embellish his past?

...Gore laid it on thick in Iowa, contending in a round of appearances and interviews that he was a small-business person and a homebuilder—experiences for which he has not been known. "I lived on a farm," he went on, and learned how to plow a "steep hillside" with mules, hose out the hog waste, and "take up hay all day long in the hot sun."

[A week earlier in an interview with CNN's Wolf Blitzer] Gore suggested that he'd created the Internet—that huge, amorphous communications vehicle that got rolling long before he entered politics. More than a year ago, he claimed he and his wife were models for the romantic novel *Love Story*, leaving the author of that book "befuddled."

...Back in his 1988 campaign for the presidential nomination, Gore defended his use of a brochure with a picture of him carrying an M-16 rifle in Vietnam, denying he was trying to make people think he served in combat. He had also appeared in TV ads wearing an olive-green field jacket and saying: "I'm a Vietnam veteran—one of the lucky ones."

Gore spent five months in Vietnam as a military information officer, a non-combat role.

JESSE JACKSON BLASTED OUT OF THE SKY

T. J. Rodgers, the outspoken CEO of Cypress Semiconductor, has dared to say that would-be Emperor Jesse Jackson has no clothes. When Jackson announced he was bringing to Silicon Valley his crusade to force corporate America to hire more minorities and women, Rodgers compared Jackson to "the sea gull that flies in, craps on everything, and flies out." Rodgers objected to the way "Jackson makes a living on dividing people" and added that high-tech firms like Cypress are desperate to hire *all* qualified candidates.

Rodgers' honesty was too much for John Templeton, spokesman for the group co-sponsoring Jackson's visit: "We can now officially describe Cypress Semiconductor as a white supremacist hate group," he shrieked in a press release. Rodgers replied that Jackson was welcome to speak at his company's shareholder meetings, and he challenged Jackson to a debate on the subject of high-tech hiring.

He also contributed an article to the *San Jose Mercury News* outlining his argument:

"Jesse Jackson...came to Silicon Valley this month to wipe out the 'digital divide'—the prejudice that causes 'many black and brown professionals [to] say they are being locked out of the industry, despite receiving training from the best universities.' Jackson says minorities should 'be shareholders, not sharecroppers.' His claims are ridiculous.... My company has 35 percent minority employees—every one a shareholder. And at the top, four of our nine executive vice presidents, or 44 percent, are minorities [specifically, Latinos]. Cypress' overall employment statistics are typical for Silicon Valley. I invite Jackson to send me the resumes of those disenfranchised people who've received training from 'the best universities.' With 115 open positions, we could use them. We hire 500 people per year and still never fully meet our needs—just like most other Silicon Valley companies....

"In 1995, African Americans accounted for only 1.2 percent of doctorates in engineering or computer science.

PROOF! MODERN ART MAKES YOU STUPID

The next time some guy in a beret calls you a fogey for preferring classic art to *avant-garde* alternatives, quick: challenge him to a maze race.

Frances Rauscher is a psychology professor at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh who has been testing the effects of listening to various kinds of music. She recently found that rats exposed to 12 hours a day of audio stimulation fared very differently depending on what they were listening to.

Rats taking in Mozart's "Sonata in D Major for Two Pianos" ended up with an average maze-running time of 34.7 seconds. Rats raised amidst white noise (a sort of hissing sound) solved the maze in an average of 44.3 seconds, by contrast, while, rats raised in silence scored at 47.4 seconds.

But the really interesting finding was that one kind of music actually had a *retarding* effect on its listeners. Rats exposed to the compositions of modern Minimalist composer Philip Glass actually ran the maze slower than the unstimulated rats—an average of 50.1 seconds.

But then maybe they were just being mellow...or anti-hierarchical...or maybe unhegemonic...or....

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African Americans garnered about 12 times more medical degrees and eight times as many education doctorates as engineering doctorates. If top African-American students choose to be doctors or educators instead of engineers, why blame Silicon Valley?

"If Jackson really wants to help solve problems, why doesn't he attack the three- to five-year education gap that African-American 12th-graders suffer in math and science, according to National Assessment for Education Progress scores? He knows that gap can be closed because the Dunbar School in Washington, D.C., a 100 percent African-American school, routinely outscored all-white schools in the city for decades....

"Shelby Steele, an African-American scholar at Stanford University's Hoover Institution labels Jackson an 'extortion artist for the grievance elite,' but cites Jackson's biggest failing as the corruption of race relations in America. 'Martin Luther King told people they had to take on the responsibility—and risk—to gain their freedom,' Steele told me. 'Jesse Jackson tells them that they are weak, victims of prejudice, that have no responsibility for their situation, and that they should rely on him to get the concessions that will improve their situation. In my opinion, that message of "victimhood" is a bigger barrier to progress than prejudice itself.'

"Steele is right.... Today, [the civil rights movement's] most visible spokesman is a hustler who exploits white shame for his own financial and political ends.

"Silicon Valley is a great place to work because of its meritocracy and free markets, which lead to a delightful diversity and prosperity. The last thing we need is the ugliness of divisive, Washington-style race politics forced on us by Jesse Jackson."

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"It's simple. By diverting Social Security funds, they can claim a budget surplus, which they use to save Social Security."

THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER

Classic Version:
The ant works hard in the withering heat all summer long, laying in supplies for the winter. The grasshopper thinks he's a fool and laughs and plays the summer away. Come winter, the ant is warm and well fed. The grasshopper has no food or shelter and dies out in the cold.

Modern Version:
The ant works hard in the withering heat all summer long, laying in supplies for the winter. The grasshopper thinks he's a fool and laughs and plays the summer away. Come winter, the shivering grasshopper calls a press conference and demands to know why the ant should be allowed to be warm and well fed while others are cold and starving.

CBS, NBC, ABC, and CNN juxtapose pictures of the shivering grasshopper next to video of the ant in his comfortable home with a table filled with food. America is stunned. How can a wealthy country permit a poor grasshopper to suffer so. Then a representative of the NAGB (National Association of Green Bugs) charges the ant with "green bias" and describes the grasshopper as a victim of 30 million years of greenism. Kermit the Frog appears on "Oprah" with the grasshopper; everybody cries when he sings "It's Not Easy Being Green."

Bill and Hillary Clinton make a special appearance on the "CBS Evening News" to tell a concerned Dan Rather they will do everything they can for the grasshopper (using other people's money), since he has been denied the prosperity he deserves by those who benefited unfairly during the Reagan summers.

Richard Gephardt tells Peter Jennings the ant has gotten rich off the back of the grasshopper and calls for an immediate tax hike on the ant to make him pay his "fair share." Congress passes the "Economic Equity and Anti-greenism Act" retroactive to the beginning of the summer. The ant is fined for failing to hire a proportionate number of green bugs; having nothing left to pay his retroactive taxes, his home is confiscated by the government.

The story ends as the grasshopper finishes up the last bits of the ant's food, while the government house he's in crumbles around him. On the TV, which the grasshopper bought by selling most of the ant's food, they are showing Bill Clinton standing before a wildly applauding group of Democrats announcing that a new era of "fairness" has dawned in America.

CHINESE TAKE-OUT AT LOS ALAMOS

Three years ago, on one of those beautiful spring days in D.C. that make you proud to be an American, the Clinton crew at the White House was busy with its morning exercise of counting Chinese money in the back room when some bad news hit. Sandy Berger, the President's deputy national security advisor, got the message straight from the brass at the Energy Department: China had apparently been stealing top secrets from the U.S. nuclear weapons lab at Los Alamos since the mid-'80s, and still had the suspected spy at work in the lab. Berger in turn briefed President Clinton.

How bad was it? The espionage had accelerated China's weapons development by 15 years. The President was informed that Beijing had stolen and duplicated America's most advanced warhead, the W-88, a miniature nuke that can be fitted in multiple warheads on China's long-range missiles capable of hitting the U.S., and on submarines that can sneak right up to the continental United States.

The Clinton team's response was the same as their reaction when Monica erupted, or Paula, or Juanita: Attack the messenger, cover up, and deny, deny, deny until everyone pleads, "Let's move on." In March, the *New York Times* finally got the story and reported that "senior aides to Mr. Clinton fostered a skeptical view of the evidence...and its significance." Amazingly, "a reconstruction by the *New York Times* reveals that the response to the nuclear theft was...delays, inaction, and skepticism—even though senior intelligence officials regarded it as one of the most damaging spy cases in recent history."

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The President, it seemed, had his own grandiose plans for cooperating with the Communist Chinese, and he didn't want any annoying facts to dirty the vision. "White House officials said they determined on learning of it that the Chinese spying would have no bearing on the administration's dealing with China, which included the increased exports of satellites and other militarily useful items," reported the *Times*. "They continued to advocate looser controls over sales of supercomputers and other equipment, even as intelligence analysts documented the scope of China's espionage."

It was the sleuthing of Notra Trulock, chief of intelligence at the Energy Department, that uncovered the bad news delivered to the White House on that day back in 1996. The *New York Times* now reports Trulock was "ordered last year by senior officials not to tell Congress about his findings because critics might use them to attack the administration's China policies." Instead of letting himself be silenced in this way, Trulock testified late last year before a congressional committee which then unanimously agreed serious espionage had occurred. So the administration demoted Trulock.

Meanwhile, it wasn't until three years after he became the chief suspect (and two days after the *New York Times* reported his existence in March) that the Clinton administration fired the suspected spy, Taiwanese-born Wen Ho Lee. A CIA investigation was also launched after the news broke, and according to the most recent reports available at press time investigators now consider the Chinese nuclear thefts to be catastrophic in scope. *Newsweek* reported March 29:

> When the CIA showed the material to a team of top nuclear-weapons experts, they "practically fainted." Chinese scientists routinely used phrases, descriptions, and concepts that came straight out of U.S. weapons labs. "The Chinese penetration is total," says an official close to the investigation. "They are deep, deep into the labs' black programs." U.S. officials believe that China may have acquired design information over the last two decades about seven U.S. nuclear warheads, including the neutron bomb.... They may also have stolen secrets about U.S. efforts to devise a nuclear weapon tailored to create an electromagnetic pulse—a man-made lightning bolt that would short out anything in an enemy nation that uses electricity.

One part of this story hasn't yet hit the front pages: The fact that the Clinton administration not only ignored evidence China was stealing America's most advanced weapons, but also flashed a green light to the export of launching technologies that could deliver those weapons. The real story is the illegal Chinese campaign cash and the donations from Bernard Schwartz, the largest single giver to the Democratic National Committee in 1995-96 and the CEO of Loral, a satellite technology exporter. At the urging of Schwartz, the Clinton administration switched licensing control for exports of Loral technology from the State Department to the more pliable Commerce Department. That change, opposed by the State Department, the National Security Council, and the CIA, provided Clinton and Gore with a steady flow of campaign funds—and the Red Chinese military with the ability to deploy much more accurate nuclear missiles.

Brian Mitchell of *Investor's Business Daily* notes that congressional investigators believe Chinese operatives funneled as much as $5.6 million to the Democratic National Committee, and perhaps another $1.8 million in suspect cash. "Over 100 people implicated in the fund-raising scandal have fled the country, refused to cooperate with investigators, or exercised their Fifth Amendment right not to testify."

On top of this, Bill Clinton personally sponsored the appointment of an agent of Asia's Lippo Group, John Huang, without the normal background checks, to a sensitive Commerce Department post with access to classified U.S. military and economic intelligence. At that post, says Gerald Solomon, former House Rules Committee Chairman, Huang "committed economic espionage and breached our national security" by passing classified information to Lippo and China.

So while candidate Bill Clinton made hay against George Bush in the '92 campaign by promising to be much tougher on "the butchers of Tiananmen Square," once elected he instead allowed them access to critical technology that made them far more dangerous. "The more you look into this," comments a clearly upset House Majority Leader Dick Armey, "the harder it is to stay away from a word like *treason*."

In a notable essay nearly a decade ago, professor Robert King of the University of Texas observed a pattern among those who spied for the Soviets during the Cold War: "Betrayal is a garment without seams, and one betrayal inexorably leads to another.... You betray your country and you will probably end up betraying your friend, your wife, your children, and everyone else in sight "

It's a slippery slope, in short, from Monica to Johnny Chung.

—***Ralph Reiland** is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

STUPID INSTRUCTIONS

Collected by Richard Lederer

- *On Marks and Spencer Bread Pudding:* Product will be hot after heating.
- *On a bar of Dial soap:* Use like regular soap.
- *On a Japanese food processor:* Not to be used for the other use.
- *On a bag of Fritos:* You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. Details inside.
- *On a hotel shower cap:* Fits one head.
- *On a package of Nytol sleeping aids:* Warning—may cause drowsiness.
- *On packaging for a Rowenta iron:* Do not iron clothes on body.
- *On a string of Christmas lights:* For indoor or outdoor use only.

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SUPERBABY

The brave new biological world edges closer every day. The latest twist is an ad placed in school newspapers at top universities from Stanford to Yale in which an anonymous couple are offering $50,000 for an undergrad's ova. But not just any ova. These finicky consumers are looking for a "super egg." And they have sketched out with startling specificity exactly what they want: The donor woman must be healthy, athletic, stand taller than 5'10", and have SAT scores greater than 1400.

For some teen-to-early-20s women, $50,000 for half a baby presents quite a moral hazard. "Some people are totally morally opposed to it," says one 6'1" player on Columbia University's women's basketball team. "Others say 'For $50,000 I'd do just about anything.'"

According to their Los Angeles lawyers (super attorneys, no doubt) the super couple have heard from 200-300 super women willing to consider selling their super seeds. Sure hope junior doesn't turn out average.

WAKE-UP CALL

A couple issues ago we predicted that "the rights of men-who-just-love-children will be one of the next causes of America's fervid liberationists" (BIRD'S EYE, January/February 1999). Well, evidence has since accumulated that the campaign is moving along.

Recently the American Psychological Association released an article that cites 59 studies of child sexual abuse and then concludes that the "negative potential" of pedophilia has been "overstated." This marks a bold entry into professional psychological circles of the pro-pederast position first laid down by pioneer sexual liberator and recently exposed charlatan researcher Alfred Kinsey (see page 47).

Second, the Pulitzer Prize, the Obie, and the New York Drama Critics Circle award were recently bestowed upon a play, *How I Learned to Drive*, which celebrates pedophilia. It portrays a sexual relationship between a 40-year-old man and his 11-year-old niece. The director of the Los Angeles production, Mark Brokaw, says of the play, "it's not about pedophilia as much as it's about a very special, very singular relationship between these two individuals."

Meanwhile, free speech absolutists continue to fight community efforts to keep pedophilic photo books such as David Hamilton's *The Age of Innocence* out of bookstores. *Time* writer Bruce Handy reviewed *Innocence* (available in Barnes and Noble and other mass outlets) and described its photos of nude children carrying captions like "Not unless—or until—I say so!" as "creepy." He warns that Hamilton freely admits his intent to arouse. The book, Handy concludes, "portrays real girls as ripening, imminently deflowerable teases. Doesn't that make them fair game, and isn't that what children are never supposed to be?"

If you thought this was one behavior that could never be mainstreamed, you haven't been paying attention to the way liberation movements develop. Better check back with us in another couple years.

WHAT $25,000 A YEAR OF TUITION BUYS

The journal *Philosophy and Literature* has announced the winners of their Fourth Annual Bad Writing Contest. Though it's hard to believe that some people actually communicate this way, all entries are from real articles by real professors claiming to make real arguments.

First-prize winner Judith Butler is no J.V.-team academic: literature professor at Cal Berkeley, Guggenheim Fellowship winner, and so forth. Now take a deep breath and read this little sample of how "one of the ten smartest people on the planet" (as one fellow professor dubs her) argues in a journal of campus-speak:

> The move from a structuralist account in which capital is understood to structure social relations in relatively homologous ways to a view of hegemony in which power relations are subject to repetition, convergence, and rearticulation brought the question of temporality into the thinking of structure, and marked a shift from a form of Althusserian theory that takes structural totalities as theoretical objects to one in which the insights into the contingent possibility of structure inaugurate a renewed conception of hegemony as bound up with the contingent sites and strategies of the rearticulation of power."

Possibly she's saying "money can't buy me love," or "when you bring out the Hellman's you bring out the best," but we're not sure.

Our sentimental favorite was this runner-up extract from a book by D. G. Leahy, published by the State University of New York Press:

> Total presence breaks on the univocal predication of the exterior absolute the absolute existent (of that of which it is not possible to univocally predicate an outside, while the equivocal predication of the outside of the absolute exterior is possible of that of which the reality so predicated is not the reality, viz., of the dark/of the self, the identity of which is not outside the absolute identity of the outside, which is to say that the equivocal predication of identity is possible of the self-identity which is not identity, while identity is univocally predicated of the limit to the darkness, of the limit of the reality of the self).

Only years of higher education can produce thinking like that.

TRUE COLORS REVEALED

A late-March story in the *New York Times* noted that Governor George W. Bush has been summoning experts to Texas to brief him on national issues, then made the nasty crack that "There may never have been a 'serious' candidate who needed it more."

A red-faced *Times* reported later in the week that this sentence was a snide remark between two editors shaping the story and had not been intended for public consumption. It came to light only because the comment was accidentally typed into the computer as printing rather than non-printing text.

We only wish that readers could *always* see the "non-printing text" that reveals how media gatekeepers massage the daily news. One good week of computer glitches is all it would take to blow away the notion, so sanctimoniously promoted by outlets like the *Times*, that we have an unbiased media.

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EYES ON THE SKIES

Homer Hickam, Jr.

© John Earle

Homer Hickam, Jr., 55, is a retired NASA engineer who worked on the U.S. space shuttle program, the Hubble Telescope, and the international space station. His memoir *Rocket Boys,* the true story of his rise from the West Virginia mining town of Coalwood into astronautics, was a finalist for the National Book Award in 1998. It describes how he and a group of friends, galvanized by the 1957 flight of *Sputnik* and encouraged by a faithful teacher, pursued their dreams of space careers.

Universal Pictures turned *Rocket Boys* into a movie, *October Sky*, currently in theaters. The PG-rated family film, which has been well received, illustrates one of Hickam's favorite statements from his hero, rocket pioneer Wernher von Braun: "All one can really leave one's children is what's inside their heads. Education, in other words, and not earthly possessions is the ultimate legacy, the only thing that cannot be taken away."

"Even now," *Rocket Boys* concludes, "Coalwood endures and no one, not careless industry or overzealous government, can ever completely destroy it—not while we who once lived there may recall our life among its places or especially remember rockets that once leapt into the air propelled not by physics but by the vibrant love of an honorable people, the instruction of a dear teacher, and the dreams of boys."

The following interview with Homer Hickam was conducted for *The American Enterprise* by Los Angeles journalist Dave Geisler.

TAE: Your book and the film have been called a message of hope in a time of cynicism. Why is that?
Hickam: From all the letters and e-mails I've received about the book and the movie, I don't think this is a time of cynicism. The movie has touched a lot of people who tell me that it encouraged them to pursue their dreams. I don't encourage anyone to quit their jobs, but to find work they love. Even when I speak to cynics I encourage them to open their hearts.
TAE: There is a big gap in the number of women and men seeking careers involving math and science. What can be done to change that?
Hickam: Well it's not that women can't handle it because my last boss at NASA was a woman. I think young people need to see role models in math and science careers. I have suggested to Universal that *Rocket Boys* become a series. There need to be shows and TV movies showing engineering as an exciting career.
TAE: Like *Apollo 13* with Ed Harris as Gene Kranz.
Hickam: Exactly. We also need to continue things like having science fairs and model rocketry programs at schools. The reason the rocket boys learned math and science was because we had to know it in order to launch our rockets.
TAE: Should private enterprise step into public schools to help underprivileged populations have opportunities for a better education and better jobs?
Hickam: I think private enterprise needs to get involved in education. If companies only have an undereducated or dumbed-down population to choose from for their employees, they have to spend a lot of money to retrain them. It's very inefficient. They may go elsewhere also.
TAE: Is there anything in the movie *October Sky* you wish wasn't there? Your publicist mentioned that you never went down in the coal mine to save your family as the movie shows.
Hickam: They got that plot device from my working down in the mine in the summers when I went to college. My mom cried every day I went down in the mine and didn't make me very good lunches. Those images were like a dream sequence. It was every Coalwood boy's nightmare that he would end up in the mine working to save his family.
TAE: Is there anything the movie left out that you wish was there?
Hickam: I wish they had left my father's real name Homer in there, because he is still famous as one of the best mining engineers West Virginia has ever produced. The producers thought it was too confusing to have both a father and son named Homer; so they left it out. I also wish the mother character in the movie could have been as strong a character as my mom really was.
TAE: Was your dad as much like John Wayne as he seems in the film?
Hickam: Well I never thought of my dad as John Wayne, but certainly he was a quiet man and very strong.

Except in the house. My mom ruled in the house. My dad was required to take an extra shower before he was allowed up into the house from the basement, and we all had to take our shoes off. My mom was very proud of our hardwood floors, and even though we didn't own the house (the coal company did), she did take care of it.

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My dad was always an adult. The parents in Coalwood lived on a different plane from the kids. They were our parents, not our friends. We knew that they loved us although they didn't often show it in an overt way. There was not much in the way of hugs. They tried to be strong and dedicated to everything they did. It was very difficult for us kids to imagine that we could ever be as strong as they were.

TAE: Is there any way your father could have helped you in your transition from adolescence to manhood more than he did? How can fathers approach that with their sons?

Hickam: I think fathers should take joy in their children who want to learn and have that extra spirit about them. Those children who love to learn and love to read. They should encourage children who are like that more.

Athletics is important. But I think that even if a father is crazy about sports, if the child is not oriented in that direction he should take joy in those other interests. I would have preferred that my father had taken more interest in what I liked to do versus what he and my brother liked to do. At the same time that provided a challenge to me to work harder to get his attention.

TAE: Did faith and prayer help you achieve your dream?

Hickam: Faith and prayer did and do sustain me. I very much believe in the Christian faith. I'm kind of like my father in this regard. I'm not much into organized religion, but I'm not so arrogant as to believe there's not a reason to have it or that there's not a greater power. I've seen too much happen to me not to believe that there is a hand leading all of us. I regularly pray and my prayers are often answered.

TAE: Can science and religion be reconciled? *Rocket Boys* brings up the subject of whether God can "speak" in math.

Hickam: I really believe that the word of God can be found in a math book or physics or chemistry book as well as in the Bible. I think that science and religion are absolutely reconcilable for anybody who is willing to not be so dogmatic. I think that the Bible should be read and studied. It is a book that was written by men even though it was inspired by God.

TAE: What is the future of the space program?

Hickam: A lot depends on some decisions that are going to be made in the next five years. Chemical rockets are up against the outer edge of their performance envelope. There's very little that you can do to make them better. And chemical rockets are never going to allow us to explore the solar system. We can do things in low earth orbit, we can make a lunge toward the moon, but they're never going to allow manned travel to Mars. Right now here at the Marshall Spaceflight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, there are several big new propulsion drives being developed using fission, fusion, and anti-matter.

TAE: Like the matter/anti-matter pods in "Star Trek"?

Hickam: They have anti-matter craft out there. They are probably going to use the anti-matter as the heat source to start the fusion reaction rather than the actual power source. If a decision is made in the next five years to proceed on one of those fission, fusion, or anti-matter drives, they will come on line in ten years and that will bust open space travel options to explore the solar system. There will always be a career in chemical rockets, but the new drives are the way to go.

If I were starting out again and wanted to work in the space business, I wouldn't go after being an astronaut. I think the astronaut corps will probably dwindle. There's no reason to have 200 federal employees only trained to go into space. Pretty soon commercial enterprise is going to open up low-earth orbit to everybody. When we start going out into the solar system, I think it's going to be opened to everybody and not just the very few. So to prepare for the new space careers, I would get involved with nuclear physics.

TAE: Your new book, to be released in June, is a work of fiction called *Back to the Moon*. What's it about?

Hickam: It's a thriller, a story of the next American trip to the moon. We go back for a very special purpose, to acquire an isotope that was discovered on the moon by the Apollo astronauts. It is a source of energy that could probably run the planet for several hundred years. *Back to the Moon* sets up a situation where it is essential that the United States go back to the moon within a six-month period. That means we have to use what's available.

It's a roller-coaster techno-thriller ride. I wanted to write something totally different from *Rocket Boys*. I wanted to write something that was entertaining as well as a little bit lighter. This falls into the Tom Clancy genre, but it comes from someone who knows the space industry intimately. It's sort of an insider's NASA book.

TV RESOURCES

The last issue of *TAE*, "How to Clean Up Trash TV," generated many requests for extra copies, and for tapes of our companion video *The Wasteland*. Both are still available, as is our earlier issue "TV: Friend or Foe?" from September/October 1997. Magazines are $6 per copy, videos $8 (both prices include shipping and handling). Contact *The American Enterprise*, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C., or phone 202-862-5870, or fax 202-862-5867. (Credit cards and checks accepted.)

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By Karl Zinsmeister

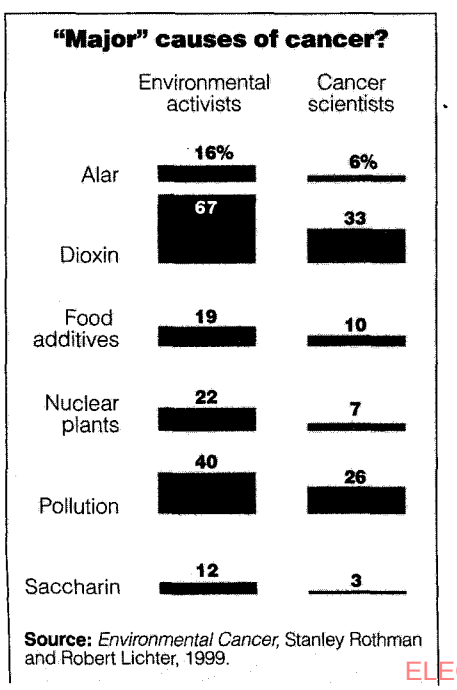
Indicators

ENVIRONMENTALISTS VS. SCIENTISTS

A book-length study comparing the views of environmental activists to those of scientific experts and the general public has just been published by academics Stanley Rothman and Robert Lichter. Its title is *Environmental Cancer—A Political Disease?* and it is available from Yale University Press.

The authors engaged the Roper Center, one of the country's leading opinion research organizations, to survey a cross-section of leaders at 16 environmentalist organizations—including the National Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Nature Conservancy, and the National Audubon Society.

At about the same time, identically worded surveys were administered to several different groups of scientific experts.

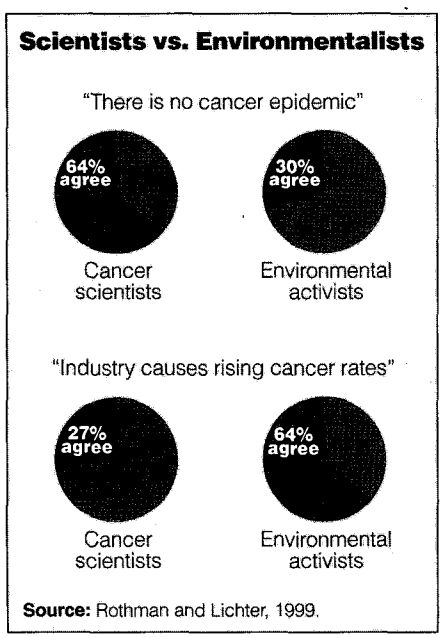


Source: *Environmental Cancer,* Stanley Rothman and Robert Lichter, 1999.

One was a random sample of 401 members of the American Association for Cancer Research who are specialists in carcinogenesis or epidemiology.

When Rothman and Lichter compared results they discovered that **environmentalists hold very different—much gloomier—views of cancer than cancer scientists do.** Specific examples of their disagreements are charted below.

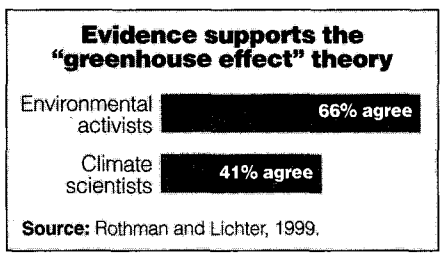
Scientists and environmentalists diverge as much in their overall conclusions as in their particular judgments of potential carcinogens. **Fully 67 percent of cancer specialists believe "There is no cancer epidemic." Only 27 percent of environmental activists say the same.** Asked whether "Industry causes rising cancer rates," 64 percent of environmentalists answer yes, compared to only 30 percent of scientists.



Source: Rothman and Lichter, 1999.

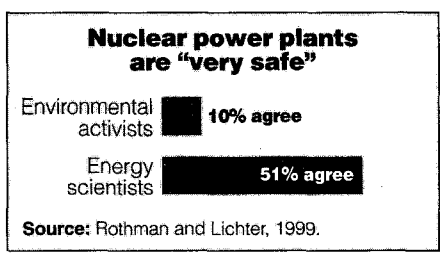
Interestingly, Rothman and Lichter found that **the more expert a scientist is on this subject**—as measured by the number of peer-reviewed articles he has published—**the less likely he is to be concerned about various cancer risks.** When assessing cancer risks on a 1-to-10 scale, scientists with a substantial number of published articles rank the dangers more than a full point lower, on average, than colleagues with less expertise.

Rothman and Lichter collected similar evidence comparing environmental activists to scientists in other specialties. For instance, **when 400 climatologists, oceanographers, and atmospheric scientists** who were randomly selected from their professional associations **were asked whether evidence supports the idea of a "greenhouse effect," only 41 percent said yes—compared to 66 percent of environmental activists.**



Source: Rothman and Lichter, 1999.

Likewise, **when scientific specialists and environmentalists were asked whether nuclear power plants are "very safe," the scientists were five times likelier to say "yes"**—51 percent to 10 percent.



Source: Rothman and Lichter, 1999.

Incidentally, in the process of collecting these findings Rothman and Lichter discovered that **scientists don't think very highly of the way the major media cover environmental issues.** For instance, only 22 percent of cancer scientists consider the reporting by the *New York Times* on cancer subjects to be trustworthy. **A mere 6 percent of scientists trust the TV network news.**

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ENVIRONMENTALISTS VS. THE PUBLIC

Scientists aren't the only people from whom environmental activists differ sharply. There is also a **wide gulf between environmentalists and the general public.**

Demographically, **environmental activists are a narrow elite: 76 percent are male, 97 percent are white, a third have household incomes above $100,000** in 1999 dollars.

Politically, environmentalists are just as unrepresentative: **63 percent describe themselves as "politically liberal," compared to just 18 percent of the general public.** Only 6 percent of environmental activists are Republicans; ten times as many are Democrats.

The split is equally wide on specific questions of policy and principle. For instance, only 6 percent of environmentalists think "government regulation of business is harmful," while 61 percent of Americans at large do. Only 19 percent of environmentalists believe that "corporations balance profit and public interest"; 40 percent of the public holds that view.

Fifty-eight percent of the public says there are no limits to growth; a mere 7 percent of environmentalists think likewise. A majority of all Americans (52 percent) say landowners should be compensated for losses incurred to protect endangered species, yet Green activists are unenthusiastic (21 percent in favor). One thing Greens *do* support: 74 percent say we should "increase taxes to protect the environment," versus 34 percent of the general public.

Asked whether "I would fight for my country, right or wrong," 57 percent of all Americans but only 9 percent of environmentalists say yes. Environmental activists support causes like race preferences, easy abortion, and gay rights at rates of 70-80 percent, versus 34-40 percent among the public at large. And fully 47 percent of environmental activists say they have "no" religion—compared to 6 percent of all Americans.

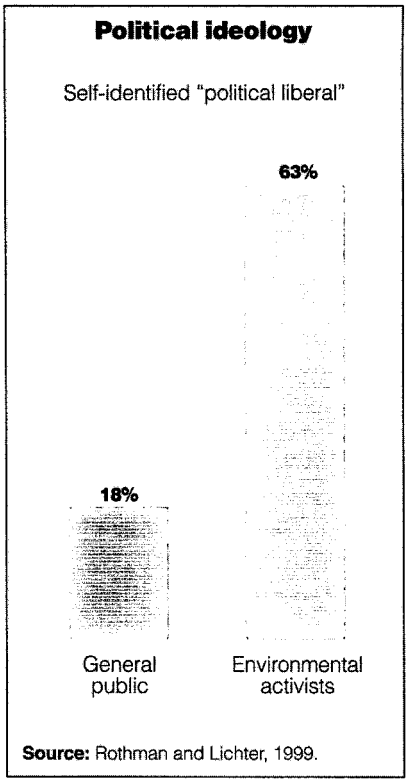
"Although most Americans are willing to describe themselves as 'environmentalists,'" Rothman and Lichter summarize, "from these data **it seems clear that environmental activists do not speak for the American public....** The perspective and backgrounds of this movement's leadership are considerably removed from those of the majority."

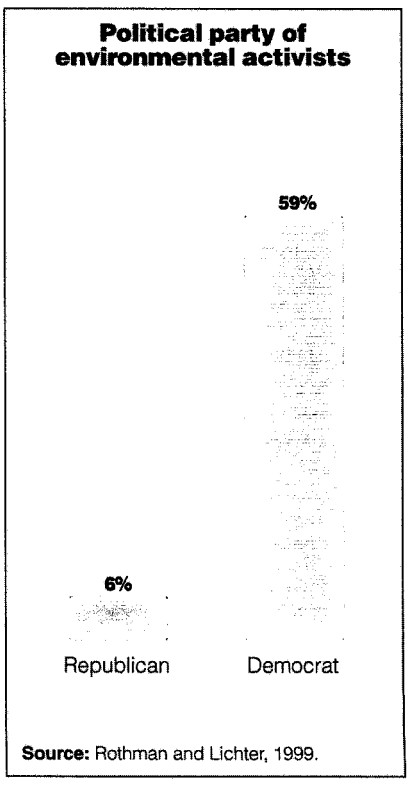
The researchers then ask, "if the activists don't represent the public consciousness and don't speak for (or from) expert opinion on scientific matters, precisely where do their views on environmental health threats come from?"

One answer is that many environmentalists are less interested in solving problems or helping people than in making principled stands on behalf of ideological principles. "**Politically, environmentalism has become a refuge of anti-growth and counterculture sentiment,**" writes moderate environmentalist Gregg Easterbrook—**a place where disaffected citizens act out opposition to modern society and technology.**

The real root of the considerable political power of today's environmentalists, Rothman and Lichter conclude, is not their democratic appeal or their scientific authority, but rather the fact that today's *media* are potently "receptive" to their message. **Environmentalist groups enjoy the huge advantage of consistently friendly day-to-day reporting.**

"Journalists see themselves as partisans for the public at large against the powers that be, in a manner similar to the environmentalists' chosen role of partisan for the planet," note Rothman and Lichter. "And **in this age of media politics, the advantage would seem to go to those who share the sensibilities and cultural affinities of major media journalists.**"





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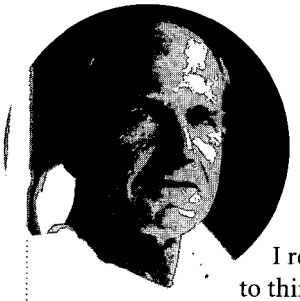
two views

TWO CURMUDGEONLY LOVERS OF THE GAME THINK THERE IS MORE AILING IT THAN CAN BE CURED BY ONE HOME-RUN DERBY.

Is Baseball Striking Out with the Public?



Jonathan Yardley

I retain a deep love for baseball, and hate to think its place in American life is fading. Yet I am convinced that is so. The home-run derby of 1998, coming three seasons after Cal Ripken, Jr.'s emphatic dismissal of Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played, gave the game a big boost. I am convinced, though, that it was a palliative rather than a cure, and that baseball, though surely it will never die, has been relegated to a secondary place scarcely commensurate with its history as our "national pastime."

The most serious difficulty baseball faces is inherent in the marketplace: competition. Until 1958, when the Baltimore Colts and New York Giants played the NFL Championship game that made pro football a national obsession, baseball had the sports market largely to itself. Except for intercollegiate football, no sport had even remotely so wide, lucrative, and loyal a following. But since 1958 the world of sport has exploded, giving us not merely pro football and pro basketball and college basketball, the most obvious claimants to baseball's old place, but also an incredible array of other sports, each of which appeals to a small but remunerative niche audience. Baseball, it develops, is poorly suited to compete in such a situation; it is becoming yet another niche sport rather than the colossus it was when, as a boy in the 1940s, I fell in love with it.

THANKS TO ENDLESS TELEVISION COMMERCIALS, CROTCH-SCRATCHING BALLPLAYERS, AND DILATORY UMPIRES, THE THREE-HOUR GAME IS NOW THE NORM

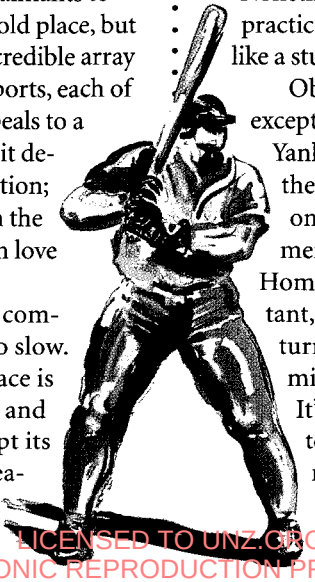
The trouble with baseball, its critics have complained since Ty Cobb was a pup, is that it is too slow. The fair response is not the usual, "Baseball's pace is one of the greatest pleasures it offers," but, "Yes and no." Baseball cannot be played at any pace except its own, which for those who love it is indeed a pleasure. It starts as early as the bottom of the fifth inning in most major league baseball games I've attended in recent years. It picks up in the sixth. By the seventh, it's gaining real momentum. And in the eighth, it's in full swing. I'm not talking about excitement building in the late innings of a close game. I'm talking about people exiting the ballpark early—very early. Me? I'm usually ready to go home sometime before the seventh-inning stretch.

Fred Barnes

Last year's home-run race between Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa alleviated none of big league baseball's problems and actually exacerbated one of them. Games are much too long. Who wants to spend nearly four hours at a game on a weeknight? Not I. Umpires are out of control. Baseball is unable to enforce a consistent strike zone, which is about as fundamental a flaw as you can get. Few players have mastered the more refined skills like bunting or stealing home or making an accurate throw to home plate from the outfield. And, if truth be told, there are *too many* homers.

McGwire and Sosa made the home-run problem worse. It's now the focus of the game at the same time that it's been cheapened, like the dunk in professional basketball. When Brady Anderson—who usually has around 18 homers—hits 50, you know something is awry. Most home runs aren't that interesting, except for a mammoth McGwire clout or an inside-the-park homer or a game-winning, bottom-of-the-ninth blast.

Nonetheless, when ESPN recaps the day's baseball games, practically all it shows are home runs. Repetitive? Heck, it's like a stuck record.



Obviously the fine points of the game are ignored, except by ESPN's Peter Gammons. But I think last year's Yankees have been slighted, too. As a Red Sox fan, I hate the Yankees, but I have to admit the '98 Yankees were one of the greatest teams ever. Yet 1998 will be remembered as the McGwire-Sosa Record-breaking Home-run Year and nothing else. Yes, records are important, but baseball is downright fetishistic about them. I turned down a chance to see Cal Ripken, a player I admire, break the record for consecutive games played. It's not a big part of baseball just to show up consistently. It's what actually happens on the field that matters, even more than the box score.

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YARDLEY continued

sure but which renders it incapable of adapting to a fiercely competitive entertainment culture where flash is of the essence. Sentimentalists in thrall to the game (too many of whom write for newspapers and magazines) may deny this, but it is true.

Spend an evening at Camden Yards in Baltimore, the game's crown jewel of the 1990s, and the point will be clear at once. There is a huge amount of dazzle in the place, but none has anything to do with baseball itself. The scoreboard, the public-address system, and the concourses quiver with manufactured excitement—instant replays, rock music, shops, concessions—all designed to distract the customers, to subject them to a multimedia experience rather than to the plain old game on the field.

Add to this the incredibly long time it now takes to play a major-league baseball game and you have the odd spectacle of an old-fashioned sport tarted up in the noisy finery of the video arcade. Thanks to endless television commercials, crotch-scratching ballplayers, and dilatory umpires, the three-hour game is now the norm in the American League, with National League games not far behind.

The ennui this induces serves only to underscore the leisurely character of the game, and no amount of cheap frills can alter that. Playing "YMCA" between innings at unbearable decibel levels or engineering "The Wave" in the upper grandstand may provide momentary diversion, but in the end fans have to turn to the game itself. As now played, I submit, it is dull and uninviting.

Dullness is not intrinsic to baseball; a measured pace *is* intrinsic, and the difference is essential. But the lords of baseball do not understand that a transition from measured to dull occurred several years ago. Though they talk from time to time about speeding the game up, there is no evidence that they really mean to do so and ample reason to fear that they will be lulled by the homer derby into thinking all their problems have been solved.

That is foolishness. Baseball's pace is wholly out of step with America's pace. As an old-fashioned man and devotee of baseball in its essence, I wish this were not so, but it is. Baseball will soldier on, attracting crowds and causing the occasional McGwire-Sosa blip on the national radar screen, but to call it the national pastime is romantic self-deception. Its day in the sun ended a long time ago, and it is not coming back.

Jonathan Yardley is a columnist and the book critic for the Washington Post.

BARNES continued

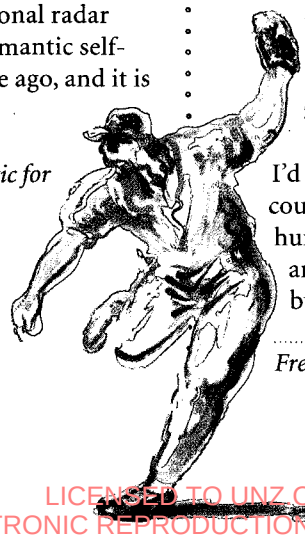
To me, the scariest baseball words are a manager's insistence that all he needs is five or six innings out of his starting pitcher. I know what that means: a long, tedious game. In the sixth, the middle-innings reliever will come to the mound. In the eighth, he'll be replaced by the set-up man. Then, in the ninth, the closer will pitch. And that's if all goes well. Often a new reliever will be summoned for every batter, righties to face right-handed hitters, left-handers to pitch to left-handed batters. I'd rather watch bowling on TV than sit through this. George Will might argue that managers are cleverly implementing their strategy. I think they're just reflexively playing the odds.

Pro basketball has it right. The games are two hours, maybe a little more, and filled with fast action. Intellectuals may not like this, but most fans do, particularly the young ones that major league baseball needs to survive. Baseball already has a problem with kids: Fewer of them grow up playing the game. My son Freddy, 14, plays basketball, football, lacrosse, and golf. The closest he comes to baseball is a wiffleball game in the backyard. My guess is that as an adult, he'll see a lot more NBA and pro football games than major league baseball contests.

LAST YEAR'S HOME-RUN RACE BETWEEN MARK MCGWIRE AND SAMMY SOSA ALLEVIATED NONE OF BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL'S PROBLEMS AND ACTUALLY EXACERBATED ONE OF THEM.

For the first time in more than 40 years, I didn't go to a single big league game in 1998. Yet I haven't given up on baseball. I doled out $135 to get the baseball package on DirecTV last year, chiefly to watch the Red Sox. So, even among the disillusioned, baseball has lingering appeal.

With a few changes, it could have more. Growing up in Washington, I loved Thursday afternoon games at Griffith Stadium. Baseball is far more enjoyable during the day. At least on weekends, all games should be under the sun. And for heaven's sake, get a universal strike zone. Pitches over the plate, above the knees, and below the armpits should be strikes, the rest balls. And I'd sure like to see more complete games. If Cy Young could pitch both ends of a doubleheader, more modern hurlers can go nine. Cut down on the parade of relievers and the games will be shorter and better. And attended by me.



Fred Barnes is executive editor of the Weekly Standard.

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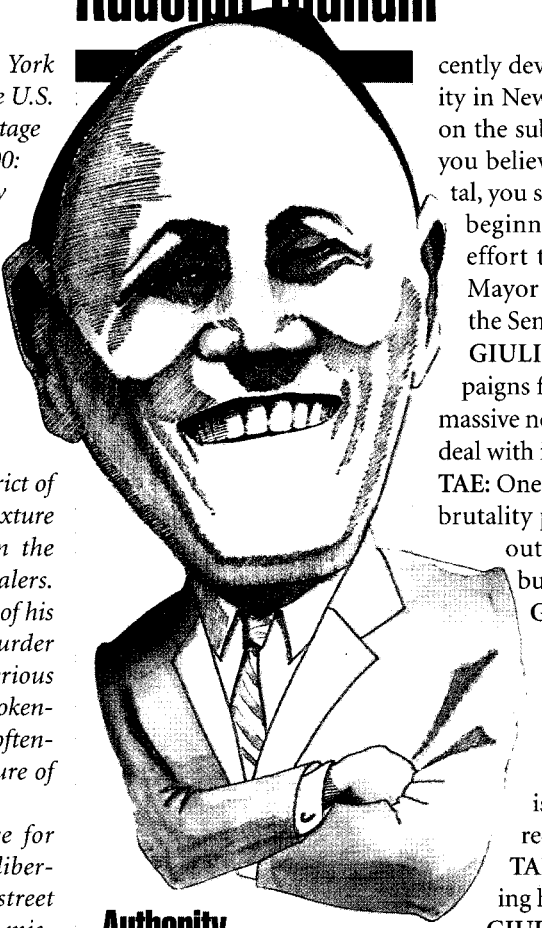
"Live" with TAE

THE ARCHITECT OF AMERICA'S MOST STUNNING URBAN TURNAROUND IS SUDDENLY UNDER HEAVY FIRE FROM THE LIBERAL ESTABLISHMENT. HE MAY FACE THE FIRST LADY IN HIS NEXT RACE.

Rudolph Giuliani



Authority, understood in a proper way, brings you freedom; freedom is a combination of liberty and responsibility.

Rudy Giuliani, Republican Mayor of New York City and almost certainly a candidate for the U.S. Senate from New York, may occupy center stage in the most-watched political drama of 2000: Will he be the man who vanquishes Hillary Clinton, or a steppingstone in her path to the U.S. Senate?

Rudolph William Giuliani is a Brooklyn boy whose parents owned a bar and grill. He loved opera and the Yankees, and still does, and hated the Mafia, which shut down his grandfather's cigar stores when he would not pay tribute money.

As a U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Giuliani became a nightly-news fixture for his high-profile prosecutorial wars on the Mafia and various Wall Street wheeler-dealers. Crime-fighting has also been the centerpiece of his mayoralty. Under his tenure, the city's murder rate has fallen by 70 percent and overall serious crime has been cut in half. The NYPD's "broken-windows" policing, which cracks down on often-ignored "petty" crime, has restored a measure of safety, even civility, to city streets.

His critics maintain that in his drive for order, Giuliani runs roughshod over civil liberties. The February killing of an unarmed street vendor named Amadou Diallo, who was mistakenly shot 41 times by police officers on the trail of a serial rapist, has galvanized anti-Giuliani sentiment. For the first time, President Clinton has shown interest in the subject of police brutality, and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has scheduled May hearings in New York City on the subject.

Mayor Giuliani was interviewed during what looked a lot like a campaign stop in Syracuse by two upstate New Yorkers: TAE *editor-in-chief Karl Zinsmeister and associate editor Bill Kauffman.*

TAE: It's clear police brutality will be the cudgel your opponents will try to use to discredit you. In the *New York Post*, former Clinton advisor Dick Morris noted that the President had recently devoted a radio address to police brutality in New York, and also planned a conference on the subject in the city. Morris remarked, "If you believe Clinton's remarks were coincidental, you sure don't know Hillary. They were the beginning of a very carefully orchestrated effort to use the White House to dirty the Mayor so the First Lady can beat him for the Senate."

GIULIANI: I've been through three campaigns for Mayor of New York City, including massive negative campaigning; you learn how to deal with it.

TAE: One of the principals in the current police brutality protest is Al Sharpton, who, to many outside New York City, appears to be a buffoon. Are we wrong?

GIULIANI: Irresponsible is the correct description, and somebody who has engaged in racial con jobs for years and has unfortunately sold significant numbers of people on the fact that he's somehow mainstream, which is part of the sadness of political correctness in New York.

TAE: Why is the Democratic party treating him as perfectly legitimate?

GIULIANI: I don't know. You'd have to ask the Democratic Party that. These rallies include signs like "NYPD=KKK," and if you really believe that, you're disconnected from reality. They'll have pictures in these rallies equating me with Hitler, which I would think would be enormously offensive to anybody who had to undergo the Holocaust. But there's a different standard for Al Sharpton. Maybe he charms the media, but he doesn't charm me. Never has.

TAE: Does the current debate over police brutality pit the working and middle classes for whom the police are a reassuring presence against an alliance of wealthy liberals and poor blacks?

GIULIANI: At the extremes it's probably true, but there's a whole big middle that wants both

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

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effective policing and good relationships with the community.

There are some police officers that people should be fearful of, but the overwhelming majority of people should have a strong connection with police officers. The overwhelming majority of police officers instill a sense of awe and a sense of decency. The overwhelming number of people are murdered by other citizens, and we need police officers to interrupt that and stop that and reduce that. We have to be very measured and careful in what we say about the police so that we can re-create a decent and safe society. The city of New York is safer than it has been in a long time.

The police brutality issue is ultimately not the thing that defines people in politics. I don't think people divide themselves as Republican, Democrats, liberals, conservatives over police brutality. It's economic issues and a much broader set of law and order issues that divide Right and Left.

TAE: If elected, Hillary Clinton would become the third carpetbagging senator that New York has elected since 1964. What does it say about New Yorkers that we're willing to elect aliens to represent us in the U.S. Senate?

GIULIANI: Because [Senator James] Buckley was from Connecticut, I don't think there was a real sense he was an outsider. The carpetbagger issue was damaging to [Senator Bobby] Kennedy. He ran way behind Lyndon Johnson on the top of the ticket in New York, and I think Johnson always believed that if it weren't for his coattails, Bobby Kennedy might not have won in 1964, because there was a strong reaction against his being an outsider.

You have to separate New York City from the rest of the state. New York City is very, very Democratic and isn't going to care as much if you come from New York. As you go further away from New York City, I find a very strong reaction against Hillary Clinton on the carpetbagger issue: People feel that this is very opportunistic, that she has no connection to New York, that this is more about her advancing her future than anything to do with the good of the state. If she runs, this is going to be a serious issue outside New York City.

TAE: Would you be willing to raise ethical questions about disappeared billing records, commodity trading, and that sort of thing?

GIULIANI: I don't think you have to raise questions like that. The press raises all those questions. If you're a candidate in New York of either political party, every conceivable question about you will be raised. Some of it's probably going to be very unfair; some of it you even sympathize with your opponent.

Do not judge blacks by the blacks who are bad, because most aren't. Do not judge the police by some cops who are bad: Most cops are good, some cops are tremendous heroes.

TAE: Bill Clinton took New York twice, but things have changed since those elections. Do you consider at this point the Clinton name to be an advantage or an albatross in New York?

GIULIANI: I think President Clinton is still more popular in New York than he is unpopular. So I would say, at this point at least, there's probably an advantage. The lack of connection to the state is a disadvantage. President Clinton was running for President. If all of a sudden you're running for the Senate in a place you haven't lived in, that's a different phenomenon.

TAE: An upstate New Yorker has not been elected to the Senate since 1958. Should New York be two separate states so that upstaters are not disenfranchised?

GIULIANI: If I represented the state, upstate would not be disenfranchised. When I ran for Mayor of New York City, it was part of my goal to make sure the boroughs outside of Manhattan would not be disenfranchised. Staten Island wanted to secede from New York City when I arrived. I think if you ask the people in those boroughs now, they would tell you that I have made them feel like part of the City of New York again.

My predecessors, going way back, always ruled solely for the benefit of Manhattan. They were perceived that way. That's not totally true, but there was a lot that was Manhattan-centered.

TAE: Should taxpayers in Onondaga County be forced to subsidize a renovated Yankee stadium or a dome in Manhattan or wherever the Yankees are eventually housed?

GIULIANI: Or vice versa. Should New York City subsidize the things that happen in upstate New York? It's a two-way street.

What I would do if I were a candidate is to say, if I've done a good job fighting for New York City and my constituency becomes New York State, I'll do a really good job fighting for New York State.

New York City, since I have been mayor, has outperformed the state in job growth, and in the four years before I was the mayor, New York City underperformed the state in job growth. So I must be doing something right.

TAE: Do you regret having endorsed Mario Cuomo in 1994?

GIULIANI: I don't know if I regret it. I didn't know all the things that I knew later. I made the decision very much out of my responsibilities as the mayor, and I've learned that you can't go

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back and change the things that you do. I think I have re-established my position as a strong and very loyal Republican.

TAE: You are a pro-choice Catholic. Does that make you queasy?

GIULIANI: No. Government should not be dictating solutions about deeply personal matters when people of good conscience disagree.

TAE: Do you think abortion is the taking of a human life?

GIULIANI: Do I look at it in the same way as you would look at murder? The answer is no, but neither has it ever been looked at that way. Even when abortion was illegal, it was not equated to murder. It was seen as a different kind of offense.

TAE: Do you attend Mass regularly?

GIULIANI: You know, I really don't think you should ask me questions about my religious practices. No, I don't attend Mass regularly, but I go to Mass occasionally.

TAE: You've pointed out the apparently superior job that Catholic schools do compared to public schools. Why?

GIULIANI: Because they're better organized along sensible principles that public schools could easily copy without copying the religious teaching, although they would have to include ethical training to substitute for the religious training.

TAE: You're sifting out the God part?

GIULIANI: In a public school, you can't teach a particular religion, but you can remove the massive bureaucracy. The parochial school system has virtually no bureaucracy. All of its money goes directly into the classroom. That doesn't happen in the public school.

The discipline—both academic discipline and moral discipline—is much greater. The teachers are more easily disciplined. There is no principal tenure. There is no teacher tenure. It's a much more student/classroom-oriented system, whereas the public-school system has become a large job protection system first and a school system second.

One of the things Catholic schools, and all parochial schools, have going for them is the child is there by choice of the parent—the child is not forced to be there. If the public school system were much more open to competition and less a job protection system, then you could have choice within the public schools. You could do what's being done in Milwaukee, and you'd still have a large number of parents selecting public schools. You would see a significant number of non-Catholic parochial and private schools develop. You would see many of the Protestant denominations develop parochial schools that would attach to their churches, and you would see private groups putting together schools because the funding would be there for it.

As you go further away from New York City, I find a very strong reaction against Hillary Clinton on the carpetbagger issue.

TAE: That means war with the teachers unions and the bureaucracies.

GIULIANI: The Republican party here has a great issue. By "great issue," I don't just mean political. We have the freedom to do something that the Democratic party doesn't have the freedom to do, and that is to break up the educational monopoly, to be fighting for more freedom for people.

We should be advocating the Milwaukee example all over the country. It's a small step that is enormously frightening to the job-protection monopoly because they fear it will be successful. If it is successful, shouldn't it happen? Successful means more kids who are poor get a better education. Why not let that happen?

Minority parents are going to make it happen faster than anyone else. It isn't there yet, but over the next five to seven years, this is the direction that we'll be going in. And it doesn't matter who fights it. Parents want more control over the education of their children. They do not want state control over the education of their children.

TAE: How did you become a devotée of the "broken windows" theory of crime prevention?

GIULIANI: I was instrumental in putting together in the first couple of weeks of the Reagan administration the Task Force on Violent Crime. Professor [James Q.] Wilson was a cochair of that task force. Their report is probably one of the best things written on what needs to be done to turn around violent crime.

That's when I first became familiar with broken windows as an articulated theory. Before that, as a knee-jerk matter, even though I had been a prosecutor, I probably subscribed to the notion that the police were too busy for the small things. Unfortunately, that list of small things was growing so much that it began to include very big things.

Senator Moynihan described it as "defining deviancy down." Things that used to shock us in the '60s no longer shocked in the '70s. Things that used to shock us in the '70s stopped shocking us in the '80s, and by the '80s, street-level prostitution, drug dealing, public urination, and aggressive panhandling—to the point where it was really assault and battery—were all being ignored as if they weren't important.

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So the broken windows theory made a lot of sense to me. If you focus on these things that are being ignored, then you stop the crime problems from developing at an early stage and you set a different tone for your community.

TAE: Are you familiar with the research by John Lott and Gary Kleck that says one of the best things you can do to reduce crime is to get *more* guns in the hands of law-abiding folks?

GIULIANI: I have not read their material. Instinctually, I'd probably react against it, being the mayor of a very crowded, densely populated city, where guns have been an enormous problem.

TAE: Do you think that private handgun ownership is a basic American right?

GIULIANI: I think that possession of arms is a basic American right. I don't have to think that. It's the Second Amendment of the Constitution. It's both a basic American right, and it's a right that's subject to regulation, like every other basic right.

TAE: At the federal level, would you support a ban on handgun ownership?

GIULIANI: I would support a uniform law. Handgun ownership should be subjected to the same kind of regulations as driving. States could have a certain degree of latitude, but at least there would be some basic things that would be agreed on, to assure society that handguns are in the possession of people who are intelligent, emotionally stable, not criminals, and understand the rules of safety that are attached to the possession of a gun.

TAE: As a prosecutor, were you licensed to carry a weapon?

GIULIANI: I was when I was a deputy marshal, but I never did. I was actually trained by my uncles in the use of a weapon because they were police officers when I was very young. And then I was retrained when I was associate attorney general and U.S. attorney, but I never carried one.

TAE: How enduring is the switch of blue-collar ethnics—Reagan Democrats—to the Republican party?

GIULIANI: It's not. It has to be re-established in every election. In a state like New York, most pronounced in the city of New York, the Republican candidate clearly has to be better in order to win those votes. If the two candidates are equal, the automatic reaction is going to be to vote for the Democratic candidate. Ronald Reagan had a very strong message that was very compelling to Reagan Democrats, right? And he ran against a very weakened President, Jimmy Carter. Then the second time he ran against a traditional, left-wing Democrat. But Clinton did a good job of occupying the middle. That doesn't mean he actually occupies the middle. He did a good job of making appearances that he occupied the middle.

The public-school system has become a large job protection system first and a school system second.

TAE: Are you going to leave a Republican party legacy in New York City, or ten years from now are we going to look back at the Giuliani blip?

GIULIANI: You never know that until ten years from now, but some of the changes that we've made will, for a very long time, affect the way politics is conducted in the city. It's going to be very hard to go back to the dependency state.

Let's say somebody succeeds me and unemployment goes up very high; businesses start leaving the city again; crime in certain areas goes up significantly. Or there's no tax reduction for two or three years, and businesses start to complain. We were getting some breaks and we were all coming back to New York and we had big job growth, and now it's slowed. I think the next mayor would have a tough time getting re-elected.

When I first ran in '89 and '93, there wasn't an experience like this one in the city's history to point to. I was talking about things that had *never* happened in New York City and a lot of people just didn't believe it.

When I was first elected in '93, I was a desperate hope. Even the people who voted for me weren't convinced that I could do it: "How could he possibly do worse? We've got 2,000 murders a year, we've lost more jobs than at any time since the Depression, most of us believe that the city has seen its best days, and we have a very weak mayor. So the things he's talking about, we don't think can happen in New York, but why not give it a shot?"

By '97, we could run on a record of having actually done many of the things people thought were totally impossible in '93: reduce welfare rolls by 460,000, taxes by $2.4 billion. Last year, we passed the nation in economic development. New York City's economy grew by one-tenth of a percent more than the national economy. That hasn't happened in a long, long time.

What Ronald Reagan did in 1980 created the conditions that made it possible to balance the budget in 1998. He changed the political debate; he made it necessary for a Democrat to be more moderate if the Democrat wanted to be elected President. Similarly, I think we have permanently changed the political debate in our city.

TAE: You have extensive experience prosecuting political corruption. Let's imagine you had been appointed Independent Counsel instead of Ken Starr. What would you have done?

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GIULIANI: (Laughter) Ken is a good friend of mine. I don't know the evidence that he had or the choices that he made; so I'm not in a position to second-guess him. I have tremendous respect for him.

TAE: The United States may soon claim the distinction of having the highest proportion of its population behind bars of any nation in the world. Are too many people in jail?

GIULIANI: If you reduced the prison and jail population in New York by 20 to 30 percent right now, you would see crime rates go back to where they were six years ago. That, unfortunately, is a necessary part of reducing crime.

In New York, we've reduced crime so much that with regard to property crime, we now compare favorably to European cities. We compare very favorably with regard to violence now to other American cities. But when you compare America to Europe and elsewhere, we just murder a lot more. I haven't been able to pursue philosophy since I was in college, but I've often thought that at the core of this is not so much the American outlaw mentality but a disrespect for authority in America. Authority, understood in a proper way, brings you freedom; freedom is a combination of liberty and responsibility.

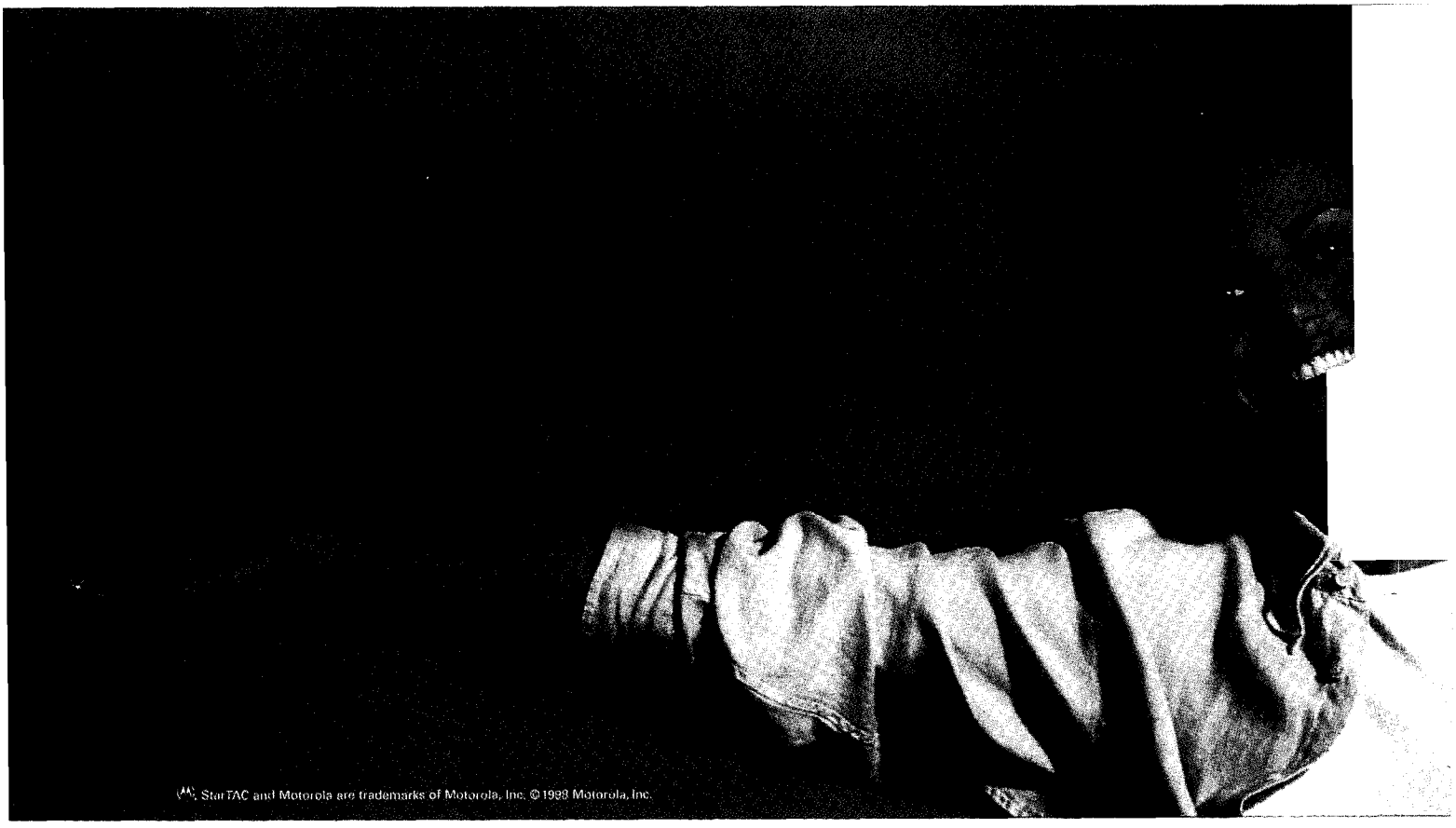
There's a whole feeling in America, easily tapped into, which thinks that "freedom" really means "license," that freedom really means you can do anything you want, any time you want, and anybody that imposes any limitations is an authoritarian.

The other thing I should mention is the breakdown in families, particularly the number of children that are born out of wedlock and brought up without a father. It's absolutely devastating.

If there were one thing that you could change to reverse the crime rates, you would want to find a magic formula to ensure more children could be born in wedlock in families in which there was a father and mother that loved them and took care of them. Eighty percent of the people who are in prison for serious violent offenses were born out of wedlock; there was no father supporting them.

TAE: You're frequently criticized for an authoritarian style. Can some of this be ascribed to anti-Italian bias in the media?

GIULIANI: At the outer fringes. When they use the word *fascist* and *Mussolini,* yes, I think that's correct. More of it has to do with what I was talking about: this discomfort that we have in America in not understanding the combination of freedom and responsibility.



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TAE: The great Italian-American film directors—Scorsese, Coppola—return to organized crime time and again. What do you think of these movies?

GIULIANI: I enjoy the movies. I like those filmmakers a lot, maybe because I lived through so much of that as the United States Attorney.

When I first became U.S. Attorney in 1983, I began prosecuting cases against the Mafia. I remember when we did the first one, I referred to the organization as "the Mafia" and created a tremendous stir. Some of the Italian-American civil rights groups wanted the Justice Department to fire me.

I spent a lot of time thinking about it. I talked to some of my relatives, talked to people that I respected, and I came to a very strong view about this. It exists. It is made up of Italians and Italian Americans. It killed a lot of people, and it's a horrible organization, and it's the dark side of Italians and Italian-Americans.

Face it. It's there.

TAE: But it's glamorized in the popular culture. You can't watch *The Godfather* and not admire some of those men.

GIULIANI: I've found some of them very humorous. I've found some of them to have certain qualities that are admirable, but I've also found them to be horrible, vicious, awful killers and murderers, and not representative of the overwhelming majority of Italians and Italian Americans.

The best way for Italians and Italian Americans to face it is not to be defensive about it but to just be honest about it. It's a small percentage of us, the worst of us—so don't be so prejudiced as to think that all of us are like that. This is essentially what I'm trying to say to people about anti-black attitudes. Do not judge blacks by the blacks who are bad, because most aren't. Do not judge the police by some cops who are bad: most cops are good, some cops are tremendous heroes.

I think I developed that way of looking at these things through focusing on how the Mafia prejudice has hurt Italians.

TAE: Last question: Is the *New York Times* a fair and honest newspaper?

GIULIANI: (Laughter) I can't answer that question. When I write my book, I'll answer it.

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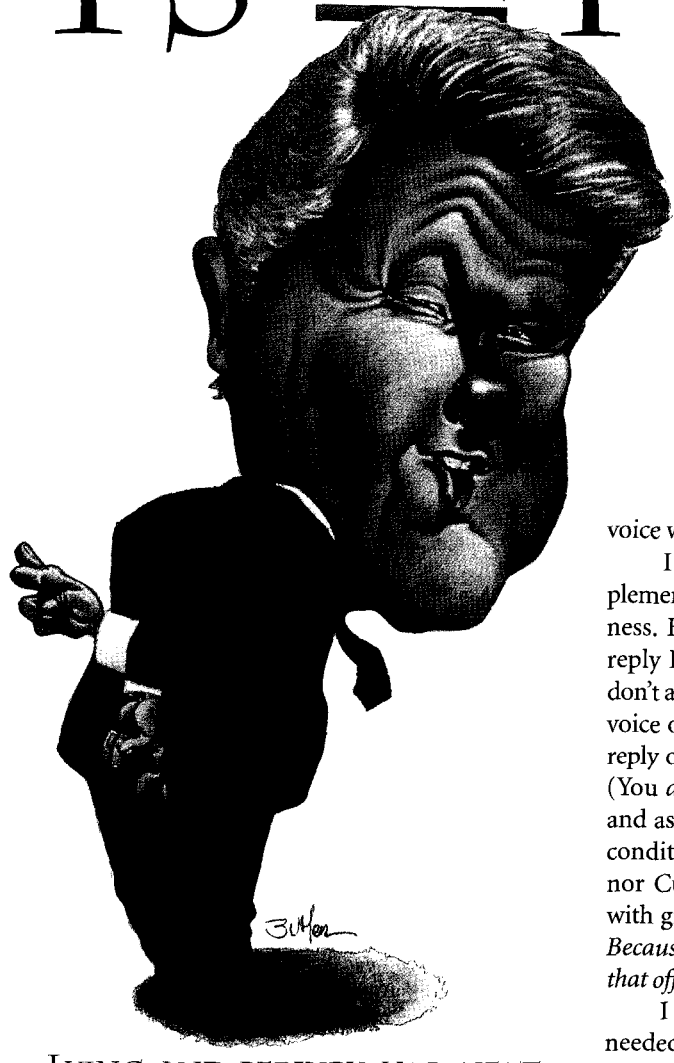

Ralph Butler

"IT'S OUR TURN"

Swallowing the Lies of Bill Clinton

By Christopher Hitchens

In New Hampshire in the winter of 1992, I helped form a shivering cluster of hacks standing around Clinton spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers. The Gennifer Flowers tapes had all been transcribed and they proved to contain a political element. In conversation with Ms. Flowers, the Arkansas candidate—as he then was—had said some pungent things about Senator Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.) and also about Governor Mario Cuomo of New York. Concerning the latter, he'd resorted to cliché and (gasp) *stereotype* about the Sicilian business community. Cuomo's endorsement and favor counted for a lot—for no reason I could see then or can see now—and he was known to be very offended. The Clinton campaign had apologized with great speed to the king-maker from the Big Apple for any hurt he'd suffered. So I had a question for Ms. Myers, and I like to think I phrased it with care.

You have several times said, I began, that the so-called Flowers tapes are a fabrication, conducted for mercenary reasons? Yes, came the reply. And you are now apologizing to Governor Cuomo for what is said about him on these same tapes? Yes. Why, if it's not Mr. Clinton's voice on the tapes, and if as you say he barely knows Ms. Flowers, are you apologizing for what the tapes say? Silence. Do you now admit that it is Mr. Clinton's voice we hear on those tapes?

I had, you may believe, a supplementary question or two in readiness. But I wasn't prepared for the reply I received, which was: No, we don't agree that it's Governor Clinton's voice on those tapes. Biting back the reply of the rube that was on my lips (You *don't*?), I threw in my reserves and asked: Why then are you so unconditionally apologizing to Governor Cuomo? The answer, delivered with great pitch and immediacy was: *Because we're very sorry for anything that offends Governor Cuomo.*

I thought that this exchange needed to be written down and treasured right away—I had no recording device and could easily be called a liar or conspiracist for telling this story even now—and I also felt somewhat as if I'd trodden on the place where the last stair ought to have been; so I took a step back. As I did so, I heard Ms. Myers make a fast-talk transition to the other hacks who'd been waiting their turn and were part of the permanent press entourage. (No, this hasn't hurt us at all. Contributions were even up a bit over the weekend....) So, not only was evidence not really evidence, and induction not really induction, but the very proof that the lie was true lay in its failure to interrupt the fund-raising process. I look back on this now as an almost Edenic moment.

LYING AND PERJURY AND NEAT EVASIONS AND SORDID DOUBLE TALK ARE NOT JUST EXCUSED BUT PRAISED AND JUSTIFIED BY A STRATEGIC MAJORITY OF LIBERALS.

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In some of the euphemisms deployed in defense of Bill Clinton by the Black Caucus, feminists, and other certified progressives, there was a sense that their turn at the sweets of office included full fibbing rights.

Later, back at the hack hangout in the Manchester Sheraton, I hoped to draw a laugh from my listeners by this tale of bare-faced spinning. But not so. I got a number of you-don't-get-it looks, and overheard a good deal of talk about the progress of the front-runner. Clinton was called the front-runner not because he was the likely winner in New Hampshire (he came in a poor second) but because the fix was in for a New Democrat, and no trivial scandal was going to derail something that the consensus seemed to want. I never met any reporter who believed the Clinton line on Flowers, but neither did I meet anyone who didn't know when the time had come to put the lie behind us and move on.

As everyone has always known, there are various excuses for lying, and the most noble one involves mendacity in the service of a higher truth. The higher truth of 1992 was that, for reasons of stability and novelty, the nation required someone younger, possibly more Southern. Certainly someone more in touch, who, whatever he might lack in character was able to be protean as between Republican and Democratic positions while having a stubborn attachment to clean and lean government and an emotional commitment to the disadvantaged. You could easily say, in fact, that the whole Clintonian project was a lie, or at least a series of consciously strategized half-truths that added up to less than one truth. But this would also involve attention to the disturbing implications of the old Roman observation—*populus vult decipi, ergo decipiatur* ("the public wishes to be taken in, therefore let it be taken in").

It's not necessary when indicting Clinton, however, to insist that we are all guilty. And I trust I am not as much of a sap as I may have represented myself above. In my day I had seen and heard the odd lie being told, and being believed. Ronald Reagan's consoling fantasies about his wartime service; George Bush's insistence that he had been out of the loop in the Iran-contra affair. But in those days I also remember a huge amount of scorn and contempt being expressed among the more principled classes, and quite a few bitter jokes, and a couple of resolutions that this sort of thing had been too leniently treated. Nor was this merely partisan; a number of liberal and left intellectuals and academics and indeed citizens had covered themselves with glory for first disbelieving and then exposing the lies (often endorsed by the GOP) of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations about Vietnam.

No, what impresses me about Clintonism is this: Lying and perjury and neat evasions and sordid double talk are not just excused but praised and justified by a strategic majority of liberals. The most serious problem of the Clinton administration arises not from the pathetic lying, but from the approbation which the falsehoods receive from wised-up ideological allies. It's only because of this assist from liberal allies that the Clintonite mantra ("everybody does it") has a decent chance of being accepted as objective truth.

Objective truth, however, is another term that has lost some of its shapeliness lately. There is a tendency, in our "post-modern" discourse, to inquire first about *whose* truth and *which* power stands to gain, and only then to take an interest in things like verification. Just as this academic fad stood in danger of imploding—with some feminists having decided to denounce the patriarchal coldness of rationality, and to credit the stories of alien-abducted rape and incest victims—it got a whole new post-Lewinsky workout. I remember writing a column in 1992 about a leading Clintonoid personality, who had heard me out about his candidate's cynicism and elasticity and calculation, and replied coolly: It's our turn. No doubt in some of the euphemisms deployed by the Congressional Black Caucus, by some of the feminists and by other certified progressives throughout 1998, there was a sense that their turn at the sweets of office—meager as these were for most of them—included full fibbing rights as seen on vaguely recalled televised hearings from the past. That all these fibs actually protected power, covered the retreat to foreign locations of various fund-raisers, and elevated a scandal-ridden presidency must have seemed a consideration of a second order. That these fibs also demeaned women, put the black help in an awkward position, and licensed the slogan of "boys will be boys" should have given some people pause.

Lack of faith or belief in the criminal justice system may also play its part, but in my day a law-and-order politician who was caught law-breaking was assumed to be additionally rank, if not additionally guilty. Mr. Clinton's pitiless attitude to crime and civil liberty seems not to have percolated yet, or else to have been caught and held at the level where the Dershowitzes and Cochrans ply their trade. If we ever undertake a full cultural anatomization of this, it will be found that everything went wrong when lawyers began to be praised for trial-strategies, including jury-tampering, that got high-profile defendants off the hook. I would add that it was a bad day when certain politicians came to expect a good press for getting a good press.

What, then, about *populus vult?* A lie needs to be believed as well as told, and the most hilarious thing said all year was that Clinton needed to be "trapped" into telling another one. For some time now, public opinion has felt at least an initial sympathy for incriminated Presidents. Why? Because, first, if a President is found to be a scoundrel, then more time may need to be spent on politics and citizenship. You may have to go to meetings. And because, second, if a twice-elected and plausible person is found to be a habitual falsifier and fraud, then many people will have to admit, if only as the corollary, that they were gulled by him. It is not only in America that such conclusions are reached with reluctance. Thus, we may note the slippage in the responses even to the poorly phrased questions in the opinion polls. Early last year, adultery was considered pardonable but perjury or its subornation not so. By high summer, perjury

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THERE IS A TENDENCY IN "POSTMODERN" DISCOURSE TO INQUIRE FIRST ABOUT WHOSE TRUTH AND WHICH POWER STANDS TO GAIN, AND ONLY THEN TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN THINGS LIKE VERIFICATION.

and its subornation were being excused because, otherwise, how was the adultery to be concealed?

One could not but notice, from the very first days, the marked tendency of the supposed scandal to become a test of everybody's sexual breadth of mind. In fact, I still believe that this false positive is the President's chiefest asset. With airy waves of the hand, the most surprising people would declare themselves unfazed, and would stretch their definitions of privacy to comprise the most public of properties in the Executive Mansion.

I don't choose to regard this as Gary Bauer or William Bennett do, as a collapse into promiscuity and relativism. The public staunchly supported Mr. Clinton's (criminal in my opinion) punitive assaults on Sudan and Afghanistan and Iraq, which must surely convince some rock-ribbed types that Americans have not lost their traditional values or fealties. When I was told, in the late 1980s, that the Boland amendments passed by Congress had not been flouted by Reagan because (aha!) they had not specifically included the National Security Council, I felt as some Republicans must feel today. I also felt gashed by the public indifference to this casuistry. One may have to become reconciled to the fact that many Americans don't like preachiness and don't care for lawyers (probably good), and also to the fact that mass society views politics as the dullest of the spectator sports (good, but not ultimately reassuring).

I, however, regard Clinton as a psychopath, and do not believe that the worst about him even began to be suspected until recently—with the disclosures of Juanita Broaddrick, and the confirmation (through congressional testimony by the perjurer's apprentices) of presidential slanders against Monica Lewinsky. With the impeachment battle played out, one is left to contemplate the lies he told, not just in public—and to the public—but in relative private, and also the motives he had for telling them, and finally (and crucially) his cold-blooded ways of doing so.

Imagine that you yourself, having promised all your friends and all your family to live down a reputation for sexual incontinence, have fallen yet again. Imagine that this is a breach of every undertaking you have ever given, not to gamble other people's stakes as if they were your own. Shame and remorse stare you in the face. How will you look your allies and domestic partners in the eye? There is not the least evidence that Clinton felt any such twinge. Instead of apologizing to his cohort, he enlisted them to lie for him (telling cunningly devised and differently packaged lies depending on whether he was talking to John Podesta or Rahm Emanuel), and then bellowed with self-pity when anyone complained.

Nor was this the first time he had recruited loyalists to do his lying, and lied to them in the process. Lars-Erik Nelson, writing in the *New York Review of Books*, may think he has scored a point when he cites a few hawks who hypocritically squirmed free of the Vietnam draft, while supporting the aims of the war. But Clinton, assuming the moral prestige of the anti-war movement as his own, stated through trusting subordinates that he had never received a draft notice! Having opposed the Gulf War, he switched sides in order, as Paul Greenberg phrased it in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, not to desert his country in its hour of triumph. That's ordinary slickness. But Clinton then went on to claim that he had *always* supported the Gulf War. Worse, he may actually believe he always did.

The more I read this come-back kid stuff, the more it strikes me as a warning. Here is a man immune to shame, dishonor, embarrassment, and disgrace. A man so wanting in pride and self-respect that, as President on a foreign trip (this was in Jerusalem on the eve of impeachment), he publicly recommended censure as the best punishment for himself. A man so proof against feeling that he put his own daughter out on the public stage, his own hand entwined with hers, as evidence first of his truth-telling (in January) and then as evidence of his contrition (in August). A man who could intone, when the truth had to be partially acknowledged: "You know some people say to me, 'I feel so terrible for you. It's so awful what has been publicized to the whole country, the whole world.' Believe it or not, and I know it's hard for people to believe, this has not bothered me very much because of the opportunity I've had to seek spiritual counseling."

There's a sick strain of masochism here, which ought not to be treated by victory therapy or Oval Office therapy, but by real professionals. Yet the strain of masochism in those who are willing to believe it, and in those who admire it as if it were genuine fortitude, poses a longer-term danger to the maintenance of a democratic republic.

Christopher Hitchens is a columnist for Vanity Fair *and* The Nation. *His latest book is* No One Left to Lie To: The Triangulations of William Jefferson Clinton.

PATHOLOGICAL

Bill Clinton's Tenuous Connection to the Truth

By Brian A. Brown

"I want an America where 'family values' live in our actions, not just our speeches."

—Bill Clinton in his 1992 Democratic Convention acceptance address

Yes, most, if not all, politicians lie. George Bush famously told us to read his lips, there would be "no new taxes." But at least he had intended to fulfill that campaign promise, was sorry about breaking it, and paid the price for doing so. It was an exceptional and regrettable thing.

But Bill Clinton's lies are anything but exceptional. They are big, small, indignant, casual, bold. Most of all, they are con-

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The PRESS CORPS gets burned

IT ALL BEGAN on Monday, January 19, 1998—the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. Most reporters were off; so it was a slow day for those of us in the White House press corps. There was no regular morning "gaggle," the name for the off-the-record, impromptu briefing that press secretary Mike McCurry used to hold in his office. There would be no full-fledged regular afternoon press conference.

Amid bites of French crullers, someone uttered the dreaded "D-word," as in *The Drudge Report*. There was something moving across the Internet about a White House intern. There had been rumblings about this story for some time, but there wasn't enough to report on—and who'd want to, anyway? Whoever had the audacity to mention the name "Matt Drudge" as a source would be summarily chastised.

But as I circled the room, I noticed to my amusement that just about every correspondent, there in his tiny cubicle, was staring at a computer monitor logged onto www.drudgereport.com.

Soon a quiet shock permeated the room. Was it true? we all wondered. How could a politician who had had so much dumb luck surviving controversy arrogantly tempt fate yet again by becoming sexually involved with a 21-year-old intern? Well, that's just Bill Clinton, as we've all since learned.

Arkansas journalists traded anecdotes about Clinton's extra-curricular activities with the Washington media even before the Gennifer Flowers scandal. Given what the D.C. press knew, they richly deserved the criticism that they often dismissed suspicious occurrences without investigating, essentially giving the White House a free media ride.

Certainly the overwhelming number of reporters who identified with Clinton's politics and way of life (roughly nine out of ten voted for him) was one reason he got off so many hooks so easily. But White House reporters were also defanged by the fact that if they asked tough questions, the White House put them on its version of a "blacklist." Then off-the-record tips would dry up, opportunities to interview administration officials would disappear, and any access to the President himself would be denied.

But by the end of week one of this new scandal, it was clear the old "roll over and play dead" routine wasn't going to happen this time. Reporters were in a frenzy. Some said it was because the story dealt with sex, but that wasn't it. Nor were the correspondents constitutional purists offended that the rule of law was being trampled. My sense is that, this time, it was personal.

After the "hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil" statements by McCurry and other White House officials, and the "I did not have sexual relations with that woman" finger-wagging denial by Clinton himself, Monicagate marked the final straw of deception. All respect for this president seemed to evaporate from the press corps until nothing was left but disdain and mockery.

It took them a while, but from now on, when the President says, "I want you to listen to me," he will be met by most reporters with the silence of deep skepticism.

—Randall Brooks was White House correspondent for the Family Channel and is editor of the O'Leary/Kamber Report.

stant. By adopting the lie as a major tool of his political life, he has changed the presidency and the country.

Some Clinton loyalists would have us believe this is a twisted view of the President, propagated by a minority of duplicitous zealots with whores in their own closets. But that can't account for Clinton's own former press secretary Mike McCurry saying, "The White House lies about everything; our credibility is zero," according to the *Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz. And it was Robert Reich, President Clinton's first Secretary of Labor, who in denouncing Clinton's lying bemoaned "not simply the fact of it...but its passionate intensity." Democratic Senator Bob Kerrey noted that "Clinton's an unusually good liar. Unusually good." And the distinctly unzealous *New York Times* has pondered Clinton's "mysterious passion for lying" and his "strategy of lying about his lies." Even the radically liberal Barney Frank said last fall that he wished Clinton "would stop" lying.

And those are his friends. Outside the Clinton fan club, his truthfulness problem was recognized much earlier. Reviewing his record in 1996, *Wall Street Journal* editor Robert Bartley wrote, "The overwhelming impression is the pervasiveness of lies—from the draft record to the Gennifer Flowers case, to the state troopers, to the health care task force, to the Travel Office firings, to responses to investigations...." George Will observed recently, "Such is Bill Clinton's fecundity as a liar, there still are darkly illuminating lies that are just now being scrutinized for the first time, even by people who have been attentive to this scandal." Peggy Noonan concurred: "He absorbs lies, and becomes them." Philip Terzian, a columnist for the *Providence Journal*, wrote that Clinton's chief flaw was his "inability to distinguish truth from fiction. Many Presidents have possessed this charming trait...but few have been so compulsively deceptive, and self-deceptive, in executive life."

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BY ADOPTING THE LIE AS A MAJOR TOOL OF HIS POLITICAL LIFE, CLINTON HAS CHANGED THE PRESIDENCY AND THE COUNTRY.

LIES, LIKE A metastasized cancer, run through Clinton's government and personal life. They are who Bill Clinton is. He smoked pot, but didn't inhale; he got out of the draft, but he didn't dodge it; gays would be in the military, but soldiers would pretend they weren't; he wasn't for arming the Bosnian Muslims, but he was; he would protect Americans from missile attack, but not from most missiles; he deplores the politics of personal destruction but Al D'Amato's a mobster, Starr deputy Hickman Ewing's a fanatic, Paula Jones/Kathleen Willey/fill-in-the-blank are trashy-askin'-for-it sluts; and, yes, he had sex acts performed on him, but he did not have sexual relations. In spewing this film of lies Clinton has created a new style of government, and anyone questioning his mendacity is tarred by the administration—and a willing media—as a "mean-spirited extremist" practicing the "politics of division."

A clear sign that Clinton's new take on honesty has congealed within the Democratic party: Not one staffer, from cleaning lady to cabinet secretary, resigned as a matter of principle, and barely any elected Democrats failed to protect him in Congress. Powerful forces must be at work to motivate an entire class of loyalists to look the other way amidst such an avalanche of lies. Bill Clinton is clearly benefiting from some aspects of liberal ideology that excuse lying.

First, liberalism is often willing to rationalize questionable tactics so long as they advance coveted ideals. Second, most liberals now adhere to a moral philosophy—relativism—that easily rationalizes ethical transgressions.

The costs of letting Clintonite falsifications root in our national politics are many. One simple casualty is dignity. That was never more apparent than when the President flamboyantly thanked his wife during the last State of the Union address as the camera zoomed in on her pursed face. In that absurd political theater a horrible Faustian deal was struck, again. He used her. He used us. And we let him.

The scope of the problem is apparent to anyone willing to review the Clinton administration's record of mendacity (the *Wall Street Journal*'s own compilation of malfeasance now runs to four volumes). The following survey is by no means comprehensive, but serves to make the point. It is offered simply to help document the historical record.

The I'm Clean Lies

• **The Clean Administration Lie:** As he took office, Clinton promised "the most ethical administration in the history of the Republic." To date, his administration has seen not only the first impeachment of an elected President but also six independent counsel investigations (plus two rejected independent counsel investigations and two potential ones) and more than 50 felony indictments and misdemeanor charges of officials, friends, and associates.

• **The I Didn't Inhale Lie:** Clinton cleared himself of "drug use" with the claim that while he puffed on marijuana cigarettes, he never inhaled. He further covered himself with his crafty statement that "I never broke the drug laws of my country" (because he did this overseas).

• **The I Didn't Dodge the Draft Lie:** He did.

• **The Lobbying Lie:** In his 1992 Democratic convention speech Clinton promised to "break the stranglehold the special interests have on our elections and the lobbyists have on our government." Actually, one of Washington's top lobbyists, Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr., told "60 Minutes" that lobbying has vastly increased during Clinton's tenure.

• **The Fund-raising Lies:** "On the eve of the presidential election, with the campaign finance issue exploding, Bruce Lindsey advised White House aides to lie about [James] Riady's visits to Clinton, telling them to characterize the visits as 'social' calls," reports the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page. Much of the ill-gotten funds later had to be returned. And by personally directing "tens of millions of dollars' worth" of advertising by the Democratic National Committee, notes Bob Woodward in *The Choice*, Clinton was able to circumvent the "rigorous post-Watergate reforms that were designed to limit and control the raising and spending of money for presidential campaigns."

• **The Health Care Cover-up Lie:** In a 1993 declaration Ira Magaziner, who headed up Hillary Clinton's health care task force, asserted that he didn't have to comply with federal laws to keep the meetings open because all involved were government employees. Actually, half of those involved were private citizens, many with financial interests in the deliberations. The American Association of Physicians and Surgeons sued to challenge the secrecy of the meetings. In awarding $286,000 in legal fees, federal judge Royce Lamberth was outraged: "The decisions here were made at the highest levels of government.... The executive branch of the government, working in tandem, was dishonest with this court." The judge added that the White House had twisted the arm of the Justice Department to not prosecute Magaziner.

• **The FBI Files Lie:** White House personnel security chief Craig Livingstone claimed 900 FBI files of former Bush and Reagan staffers were acquired through a "bureaucratic snafu." A key player, Anthony Marceca took the Fifth when called to testify. Hillary Clinton denied having anything to do with hiring Livingstone, but two former White House FBI agents said she did.

• **The Billy Dale Is Guilty Lie:** After slipping their cronies in to run the White House travel office, Billy Dale, the office's former head, was prosecuted to provide the cover that he had to be replaced because he was crooked. A jury acquitted him in two hours.

• **The Hubbell Lies:** The White House worked to have large sums of cash provided to former associate attorney general Webster Hubbell, as he considered cooperating with the

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CLINTON'S LIES ARE ANYTHING BUT EXCEPTIONAL: THEY ARE BIG, SMALL, INDIGNANT, CASUAL, BOLD AND CONSTANT.

Whitewater investigation. *USA Today* reported Hubbell received "more than $500,000" from companies and people close to the White House.

• **The We Aren't in Control of Carville Lie:** Hatchet man James Carville and the White House have feigned that they operate independently. But the *Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz, reporting for *Vanity Fair,* wrote that Carville "often plotted strategy with the President," while "his outsider status gave him a veneer of independence."

• **The Governors Lie:** In 1994, Clinton told a gathering of governors that he was prepared to compromise on universal health care coverage. He insisted the following morning that he hadn't said any such thing.

• **The Tax Return Lie:** Clinton had his friend Vince Foster sign fraudulent tax returns in 1992 that neglected to mention the gift James McDougal gave the Clintons when he took over the debt in the Whitewater affair. The *New York Times* reported in August 1995 that the Clintons "knew" that the Whitewater Development Company "had made payments for which she and her husband later claimed the deductions, on their 1984 and 1985 tax returns."

• **Some Whitewater Lies:** As the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page reported, "Mrs. Clinton's work at the Rose Law Firm covered a [land] deal called Castle Grande; the Resolution Trust Corp. concluded that the Castle Grande deal was a 'sham transaction' designed to conceal Madison's ownership.... It also happens that in September 1996, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. concluded that a document drafted by Mrs. Clinton had been used by McDougal's Madison S&L 'to deceive federal bank examiners.'"

• **The We *Are* Cooperating Lies:** Stone walls were erected to shield the Clintons' tax returns and commodity trades, the health care task force, travelgate, the White House pass fiasco, possible connections between Commerce Secretary Ron Brown's trade trips and campaign donations, and the missing Rose Law Firm billing records—which turned up on a table in a room next to Hillary's study, which the Clintons swore they could not explain.

• **The Let's Stop the Politics of Personal Destruction Lie:** As he was being impeached, Clinton spoke to a pep rally of Democratic Congressmen and pleaded with Republicans to "stop the politics of personal destruction." Yet he helped orchestrate attacks on a gaggle of his female accusers: Paula Jones was trailer park trash, Sally Perdue was a "flake," and Monica—until the blue dress arrived—was a "stalker." One deputy of Ken Starr was tarred as a "religious fanatic," another as a sexual deviant. Starr himself was savaged. Micah Morrison of the *Wall Street Journal* reports that in 1996, while Senator Alfonse D'Amato's Whitewater Committee was meeting, the White House handed ABC reporter Jackie Judd "a D'Amato 'Ethics Sampler'" that "recounted allegations of the senator's influence peddling and supposed mob ties."

The Lies of Executing His Office

• **The Oath of Office Lie:** When Bill Clinton took the oath of office he promised to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution."

• **The Mend It Don't End It Lie:** He said he would mend affirmative action, but the *Wall Street Journal* reported in January that his administration is expanding it, forcing businesses that work with the government to submit race, age, sex, and salary information to the Labor Department.

• **The *I* Ended Welfare As We Know It Lie:** Governors like Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin are behind the more than 40 percent drop in welfare rolls. Clinton did sign a Republican Congress's welfare reform bill, but only after governors began producing stunning results—despite federal constraints—and after his pollster, Dick Morris, told him refusing to sign could cost him the '96 election.

• **The Era of Big Government Is Over Lie:** In his 1996 election-year State of the Union address, Clinton proclaimed "the era of big government is over." But his 1998 address laid out plans for dozens of new and expanded federal programs costing tens of billions of dollars and sinking the central government's tentacles into everything from neighborhood schools to stocks.

• **The I'm Reasonable on Abortion Lie:** Clinton said he wanted to make abortion "safe, legal and rare," then repeatedly vetoed measures that would reduce abortion, including a ban on partial-birth abortions—the procedure that sucks the brain out of a partially born child.

• **The Social Security Reform Lie:** Clinton has repeatedly promised reforms to save Social Security. But his last State of the Union speech revealed that he actually intends merely to bloat its funding by funneling budget surpluses into the program without making substantive reforms. The current systems remain on course to collapse under the pressure of Baby Boom retirements.

• **The Medicare Reform Lie:** In the very same State of the Union address in which Clinton promised to save Medicare from its current race into insolvency he also promised a hugely expensive new prescription drug benefit (it polls well) that would *accelerate* the program's financial slide. As with Social Security, his main "reform" will merely be to temporarily paper over financial imbalances by transferring budget surpluses into the previously self-financing program.

• **The I Am a Feminist Lie:** Clinton, *The New Republic*'s Andrew Sullivan noted in 1996, "portrays himself as a champion of feminism, while ruthlessly stifling a legitimate sexual harassment suit against him."

• **The Tax Cut Lie:** In 1996, columnist Paul Gigot pointed out that "Clinton can propose a tax cut in 1992, then

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renege, then propose it again before vetoing it, and now propose it again in 1996—and still win style points for being so politically nimble."

• **The I Saved the Military Lie:** In 1992, Clinton promised to maintain "the strongest defense." Then for years he slashed the defense budget. This year, finally offering an increase, he now presents himself as the military's savior.

• **The Bosnia Lie I:** From the outset the President promised that the deployment of U.S. troops would be limited to a year. "If we leave...and they...start fighting again...it means we gave them a chance to make their peace and they blew it." But in December 1997, rationalizing a second extension of our presence, he said, "It is imperative that we not stop until the peace here has a life of its own, until it can endure without us."

• **The Bosnia Lie II:** Clinton made it appear he opposed giving the Bosnians arms, but in fact his administration gave the Iranians a green light to arm them.

• **The China Lies:** During the 1992 campaign Clinton savaged his opponent's China policy: Bush "continues to coddle aging rulers with undisguised contempt for democracy, for human rights, and for the need to control the spread of dangerous weapons technologies." Since his election, Clinton has studiously ignored arrests of dissidents, military bullying of Taiwan, and harsh oppression in Tibet. At the request of a major Democratic donor, the Administration approved transfer of sensitive missile technologies to China that significantly improved the Communists' long-range missiles. The administration collected illegal campaign contributions from China. Most recently, it tolerated a Chinese spy at Los Alamos who stole U.S. nuclear secrets for years.

• **The Somalia Lies:** After allowing a gangster to chase the U.S. Army out of Mogadishu, Clinton claimed his failed "nation-building" gave Somalia "a chance to become a stable land."

• **The Haiti Lies:** In the '92 campaign Clinton savaged Bush for sending Haitian refugees back to their island. When he became President, he shipped them back too.

The Lies About Sex (and Job Offers, and Threats...)

• **Juanita Broaddrick:** Even rabid Clinton apologist Patricia Ireland admits that Broaddrick's claim she was raped by Bill Clinton 20 years ago is "compelling." Accused of rape by a mature and believable woman, the President is silent beyond a one-sentence statement by his lawyer. But then, as one writer has noted in *The Nation*, "almost no allegation ever made by a woman and denied by him has proven to be untrue."

• **Gennifer Flowers:** In 1992 Bill Clinton denied having an affair with Gennifer Flowers. Then under oath in the Paula Jones case he admitted it. Bill Clinton's taped advice to Gennifer Flowers in 1991: "If everybody's on record denying it you've got no problem.... I wonder if I'm going to be blown out of the water with this. I don't see how they can...if they don't have pictures." At one point Flowers worries about the state job Clinton arranged for her. He responds, "if they ever ask if you've talked to me about it, you can just say no." Flowers says she was threatened after she went public in 1992.

"I Honestly Don't Recall"

IN THE PORTIONS OF President Clinton's January 17, 1998 Paula Jones deposition made public, our chief executive's memory failed him 267 times. Here is a list of his answers and how many times he invoked each one.

I don't remember—	71
I don't know—	62
I'm not sure—	17
I have no idea—	10
I don't believe so—	9
I don't recall—	8
I don't think so—	8
I don't have any specific recollection—	6
I have no recollection—	4
Not to my knowledge—	4
I just don't remember—	4
I don't believe—	4
I have no specific recollection—	3
I might have—	3
I don't have any recollection of that—	2
I don't have a specific memory of that—	2
I just can't say—	2
I have no direct knowledge of that—	2
I don't have any idea—	2
Not that I recall—	2
I don't believe I did—	2
I can't remember—	2
I can't say—	2
I do not remember doing so—	2
Not that I remember—	2
I'm not aware—	1
I honestly don't know—	1
I don't believe that I did—	1
I'm fairly sure—	1
I have no other recollection—	1
I'm not positive—	1
I certainly don't think so—	1
I don't really remember—	1
I would have no way of remembering that—	1
That's what I believe happened—	1
To my knowledge, no—	1
To the best of my knowledge—	1
To the best of my memory—	1
I honestly don't recall—	1
I honestly don't remember—	1
That's all I know—	1
I don't have an independent recollection of that—	1
I don't actually have an independent memory of that—	1
As far as I know—	1
I don't believe I ever did that—	1
That's all I know about that—	1
I'm just not sure—	1
Nothing that I remember—	1
I simply don't know—	1
I would have no idea—	1
I don't know anything about that—	1
I don't have any direct knowledge of that—	1
I just don't know—	1
I really don't know—	1
I can't deny that I did, I just—I have no memory of that—	1

—*courtesy of the* Washington Times

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NOT ONE CLINTON STAFFER, FROM CLEANING LADY TO CABINET SECRETARY, RESIGNED, AND BARELY ANY ELECTED DEMOCRATS FAILED TO PROTECT HIM IN CONGRESS.

• **Paula Jones:** *National Journal* legal reporter Stuart Taylor notes that Jones had "impressive evidence." In an attempt to hush her up, Clinton allegedly mentioned Jones' boss and said, "You're smart. Let's keep this between ourselves." After long protesting his innocence, he ended up paying her an $850,000 settlement.

• **Sally Perdue:** Perdue admitted in 1992 to having had an affair with Bill Clinton. He swears not. She was threatened after speaking up.

• **Dolly Kyle Browning:** She admits to having had an affair with Bill Clinton. He swears not. Browning said under oath that Clinton campaign workers told her she would be "destroyed" if she revealed her alleged affair with Clinton.

• **Elizabeth Ward Gracen:** Gracen, who had a dalliance with Bill Clinton, was allegedly asked by one of his campaign workers to lie about it.

• **Kathleen Willey:** Clinton denies groping her outside the Oval Office, but a major Democratic donor allegedly tried to influence her testimony. Just before she was set to testify, she was threatened.

• **The Troopers:** A number of Arkansas state troopers gave sworn testimony of how they assisted and shielded Clinton's sexual escapades. He swears they're lying, he's not. Some later claim under oath to have been threatened as well.

The Monica Lewinsky Lies

(Skip this section if your eyes are glazing over.)

• **The Friendship Lie:** On August 17, 1998, President Clinton said, "I regret that what began as a friendship came to include this conduct." Actually, as George Will noted, "The 'conduct' that included oral sex began the very day in 1995 that Clinton first met Lewinsky.... Lewinsky has testified that even a month into both the 'friendship' and 'this conduct,' she was still doubtful that Clinton even knew her name."

• **The "Great Book!" Lie:** Monica was peeved when, upon asking the President how he liked *Vox*, a book she'd given him, he replied that he'd only gotten to chapter three. The book has no chapters.

• **The I Take Responsibility Lie:** After testifying in the Lewinsky matter he announced that he would "take complete responsibility for all my actions, both public and private." But he has yet to admit to lying.

• **The Sexual Relations Lie I:** On January 17, 1998, in a deposition for the Jones case, President Clinton denied having sex with Monica Lewinsky. Under Clinton's tortured claim, Monica had sex with him but he didn't have sex with her.

• **The Sexual Relations Lie II:** On January 26, 1998, an angry, red-faced Bill Clinton wagged his finger at the nation announcing that he never had "sexual relations with that woman, Ms. Lewinsky."

• **The Sexual Relations Lie III:** Before testifying to the grand jury Clinton swore he would testify fully and truthfully. Reviewing that testimony, even senior Democratic members of Congress concluded he lied under oath.

• **The Staff Lie:** Clinton lied to aides like Sidney Blumenthal by claiming Monica was a "stalker" who "threatened him."

• **The *Is* Lie:** Is is is, period.

• **The I Don't Recall Lie:** The *Washington Times* counted 267 times during Clinton's January 17 Paula Jones deposition that his memory failed him (see nearby box).

• **The I Wasn't Alone with Her Lie:** By which he apparently meant that the White House was not empty. (No joke!)

• **The I Wasn't Coaching Betty Currie Lie:** When the most powerful man in the world makes declarative statements to a secretary specially summoned for the purpose on a Sunday, he is not, as Clinton claimed, just asking questions.

• **The I Wasn't Listening to Bennett Repeat My Lie Lie:** During the Jones trial, a sexual affair Clinton had labored to hide popped up and we are supposed to believe that the wide-eyed President (as shown on the videotape) was not paying attention as his lawyer responded to it.

• **The I Want to Testify Lie:** Clinton announced, "I am looking forward to the opportunity...of testifying. I am anxious to do it." Yet he evaded six prior requests to appear, only doing so when subpoenaed.

Other Assorted Lies

• **The Dead Fathers Lie:** On his winter trip to Israel, Clinton referred to a "profoundly emotional experience" of meeting "some little children whose fathers had been killed in conflict with Palestinians." But the *Forward* reports that Israeli government sources later revealed Clinton never met with any such children.

• **The I Remember Churches Burning Lie:** In a weekly radio address Clinton professed that "I have vivid and painful memories of black churches being burned in my own state when I was a child." But an exhaustive survey by Arkansas newspapers of state civil rights leaders found not one who could recall any such burnings.

• **The I Won't Run for President Lie:** When Clinton was elected governor of Arkansas he promised not to run for president in 1992.

• **The Character Counts Lie:** Clinton declared a National Character Counts Week with the statement that "Individual character involves honoring and embracing certain core ethical values: honesty, respect, responsibility, hard work, fairness, caring, civic virtue, and citizenship. Americans must do everything possible to create a society in which these virtues are not only taught but also acted out in daily life so that our young people can witness firsthand their value and learn right from wrong. My administration has made this effort a top priority."

• **The Golf Score Lie:** He lies about that too.

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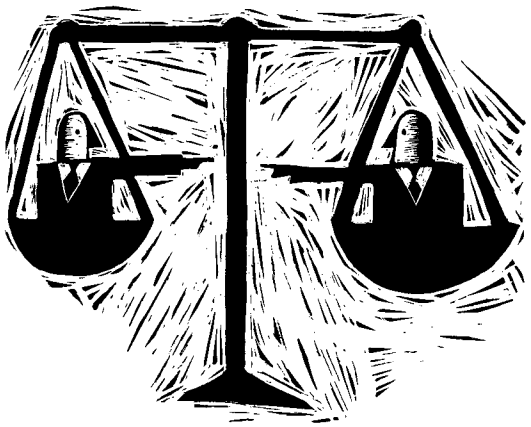
Lies IN OUR COURTROOMS



An Irishman stopped before a grave in a cemetery whose tombstone declared: "Here lies a lawyer and an honest man."

"An' who'd ever think," he murmured, "there'd be room for two men in that one little grave!"

THE GENERAL PUBLIC, whose view of the legal profession can be summed up in 1,001 lawyer jokes, might be shocked to know that lawyers have some obligation to tell the truth. But they do—as Bob Bennett, President Clinton's lawyer, can attest. During the Paula Jones deposition, Bennett introduced an affidavit from Monica Lewinsky that, he assured the court, meant she had had "absolutely no sex of any kind in any manner, shape, or form, with President Clinton." The Big He then affirmed that her affidavit was "absolutely true."

LAWYERS PLAY TO WIN, BUT THERE ARE LINES THEY AREN'T SUPPOSED TO CROSS.

When it later turned out her affidavit was absolutely false, Bob Bennett faced a serious problem. If Clinton had told him beforehand of his relationship with Monica, Bennett could have been disbarred for making false statements in court. If—as seems likelier—Clinton lied to his own lawyer, then Bennett was still under an ethical obligation to set the record straight and withdraw from the case. Bennett carried out his duty in a September 30 letter to Judge Susan Webber Wright telling her, in legalese, oh never mind. Clinton, himself a member of the Arkansas Bar, could still face disbarment if it can be proven he lied under oath.

The Clinton case highlights the law's uneasy relationship with the truth: Lawyers play hard to win, and they're supposed to, but there are lines they aren't supposed to cross, ethical obligations they oughtn't violate. Movies and TV celebrate the gamesmanship of the profession—the clever gambit that can win a million dollars or free a man charged with murder—but all that jousting and maneuvering is supposed to result in a noble goal: finding out what actually happened. It may seem paradoxical to assume that truth will result from the adversarial process, sort of like assuming a food fight will produce a delicious meal. But that's the premise of our legal system.

How well is the system doing its job? If we judge by the evidence of two of the most famous legal cases of the 1990s—one civil, the other criminal—the answer is: not very well at all.

In the O. J. Simpson case, Johnnie Cochran managed to turn a mere murder trial into a referendum on racism in America. He skillfully shifted the focus from the overwhelming evidence of his client's guilt to Detective Mark Fuhrman's use of racial epithets. Indeed in closing arguments he even compared Fuhrman to Hitler. The overwhelmingly black jury was so determined to "send a message"—they only deliberated for four hours—that the question of who actually killed Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman (Colombian drug dealers? Kato Kaelin? the LAPD?) was all but forgotten. It was small consolation that Simpson was later held liable by a civil jury.

In the breast implant cases, the kings of torts achieved a feat almost as impressive as Cochran's: They won billions in damages and drove breast implant manufacturer Dow Corning into bankruptcy—no

BY MAX BOOT

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Many lawyers now see Johnnie Cochran's shameful demagoguery as a model of trial advocacy.

matter that the scientific world is virtually unanimous that breast implants don't cause any systemic diseases. The scientific truth counted for little against the plaintiffs' parade of sympathetic women and "expert" testifiers whose chief expertise lay in collecting three-figure hourly fees.

WHEN JOHNNIE COCHRAN has displaced Perry Mason as the most famous lawyer in America, an observer might be forgiven for wondering: Whatever happened to the truth? Aren't trials about establishing the facts? How did the system go so badly awry?

How naive! How eurocentric! How patriarchal! Some of the leading lights of the legal academy contend that concepts like "the truth" are badly outmoded. In their book *Beyond All Reason*, Daniel A. Farber and Suzanna Sherry quote Stanford Law Professor Deborah Rhode: "Knowledge is socially constructed rather than objectively determined." That is to say, society "constructs" whatever truths it wants. But who gets to socially construct truth?

Why, the "straight," white, male power structure of course. Adherents of "Critical Legal Studies" and "Critical Race Studies," two of the hottest movement on law school campuses in the '90s, argue that courtrooms are merely battlegrounds for the race or gender struggle. None of this should surprise anyone familiar with the trendy European thinkers—Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and the like—who inspire these campus radicals. Similar ideas have taken root in college humanities departments. But what happens in those places is of interest only to a handful of students and scholars. What happens in law schools, unfortunately, affects the rest of society.

Jeffrey Rosen argued in *The New Republic* that in the O. J. Simpson case, "Cochran's strategy in the courtroom might be best described as applied critical race theory." The same might be said for Professor Rhode, who was one of the counsels to the House Democrats in the impeachment inquiry. It's fun to speculate whether her relativist approach to the truth helped shape the Democrats' defense of Clinton on, well, relativist grounds: Perjury isn't really so important, everybody lies about sex, etc.

An even more noxious strain of applied critical race theory may be traced to Paul Butler, a George Washington University law professor who proudly proclaims his desire to "subvert" a legal system he views as irredeemably racist. He suggests that in most nonviolent drug cases, "the black juror ought to use her power to emancipate the brother, even if he is absolutely 100 percent guilty." To the extent that jurors take this sort of talk seriously they are doing grave injury to poor inner-city dwellers, who after all are the chief targets of African-American criminals. And there is some evidence based on acquittal and hung-jury rates that race-based jury nullification has become a problem in heavily minority jurisdictions like the District of Columbia and the Bronx.

Still, it would be easy enough to dismiss critical race theorists and their posturing as an exotic bloom flowering in one small corner of the legal hothouse. Easy enough—except for one thing. The nihilist outlook of these academic crypto-Marxists neatly complements the staunchly capitalist approach dominant among attorneys, especially those who represent criminal defendants and civil plaintiffs.

Alan Dershowitz, one of America's most famous lawyers and a member of Simpson's Dream Team, instructs us in his book on the Simpson case that "'truth' is a far more complex goal than may appear at first blush." And: "Truth, although one important goal of the criminal trial, is not its only goal." Dershowitz is actually a critic of radical activists on law school campuses. But like many other lawyers, he glorifies the gladiatorial aspect of trials over the results. He thinks the "right" outcome is whatever the courts produce. He views his role as testing the prosecution's case, raising "reasonable doubts," and letting the chips (read: the truth) fall where they may: "When defense lawyers represent guilty clients—as most do, most of the time—their responsibility is to try, by all fair and ethical means, to prevent the truth about their client's guilt from emerging."

The key here is "fair and ethical"—a concept whose meaning has shifted over time. In 1966 a law professor named Monroe Freedman wrote a pathbreaking article in the *Michigan Law Review* in which he argued that a lawyer was being perfectly ethical if he (1) tried to discredit "the reliability or credibility of an adverse witness whom you know to be telling the truth"; (2) put a witness on the stand "when you know he will commit perjury"; and (3) "give your client legal advice when you have reason to believe that the knowledge you give him will tempt him to commit perjury." This so outraged some judges, including future Chief Justice Warren Burger, that they tried to have Freedman disbarred. Yet nine years later when Freedman made the same arguments in book form the American Bar Association (ABA) gave him an award.

This reflected a larger shift within the profession. In 1986, for instance, the American Bar Association dropped from its ethical standards a provision that lawyers "should not misuse the power of cross examination or impeachment by employing it to discredit or undermine a witness if he knows the witness is testifying truthfully." It's still unethical under the ABA guidelines for a lawyer to countenance perjury by his client, as Bob Bennett well knows, but this is usually circumvented by the lawyer simply not asking his client if he's guilty. It's clear that the legal profession has shifted away from truth-finding, toward "my client *über alles*." Thus many lawyers now see Johnnie Cochran's shameful demagoguery as a model of trial advocacy.

That's not to say defense lawyers should refuse to represent the guilty, or that the accused should not enjoy any protec-

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"If you don't want to tell the truth, I understand."

COPS HATE LIARS. Lying is a person's way of avoiding responsibility, and since we are in the business of holding people responsible for their actions, liars give us fits. We see more lying now than we used to, even when people don't have to. I've had witnesses lie in a case even after the bad guy admitted the truth.

Lawyers constantly advise their clients never to tell the cops anything. The way the system is set up (by lawyers) is not to find truth or dispense justice but to allow defense attorneys to get their client off.

This is not lost on today's youth, already immersed in a world of reduced accountability. Take away penalties for mendacity, and you end up with lots of sociopathic liars.

Five years ago I could tell who was lying by a suspect's body language. Head would drop, eyes would shift down, the perpetrator would hunch over or otherwise signal his deceit. Now a suspect will look right at you and tell whoppers without any restraint, because the basic moral indoctrination that links lying to guilt and remorse has not taken place.

One habitual liar I dealt with was a huge young thief named John. My partner and I would chase him all over the city for months as he stole, burglarized, and dealt drugs. When we did catch him he would always deny the crime and claim "a black guy" did it. In our overcrowded courts, this diversion actually worked a couple times. About 18 months ago John robbed a bank and was seen running from the scene and getting into a rental car. The FBI waited for him at the rental office, where he soon showed up with a couple thousand dollars in cash, wanting to upgrade to a Mustang. Even then he tried claiming that "the black guy did it."

Earlier this year, a new detective came to me and asked for help. He had a 12-year-old boy in the interview room who was denying a burglary. The boy had been seen in the neighborhood. The boy's ballcap was found in the victim's bedroom. The kid's 12, I thought, how hard can this be?

"This your ballcap?" "Yup."

"Were you wearing it today?" "Yes."

"Can you explain how it got into that house?" "No."

"Did you lend it out?" "No."

"Then tell me how the heck it got into the house." "Don't know," answered the kid, staring right at me.

For some people, lying isn't wrong any more; it's whether lying gets you into or out of trouble that matters. When taught by our leaders, this is absorbed by youngsters, and I don't just mean ghetto kids. My partner is working on a huge number of burglaries done by upper-middle-class, two-parent, white high school students acting out for fun and profit. We interviewed them, and some of the less-involved kids admitted the facts. Two others lied without let-up, though if you looked at their relaxed demeanor and unflinching gazes you would be hard pressed to tell.

Inside one house that they tried to burglarize was a 13-year-old witness. We showed some photos to the girl. She picked out our suspect. He came back in and we shoved the photo array under his nose. "See anyone you recognize?" He nodded. "I see myself." My partner smiled, "so did the little girl." The teen's face fell. He knew he had lost the first battle.

I looked square at him, "Tell me about that day you did all the burglaries."

"Oh *that* day." I figured we had him. But no: He admitted to being at that house, but *not* at the next burglary which took place only minutes later around the corner. He started lying again. Why? No eyewitness, no prints, no other evidence. Under this method of defensive lying you give up ground grudgingly, only as you're forced to. (Remind you of any prominent contemporary American?)

Our suspect said he didn't want to take a polygraph test because his dad said they were unreliable. His father and mother are clearly the root of the problem. When confronting his son about the crimes, the father actually told him, "Son, you can tell me if you want. But if you don't want to I understand."

Leftover '60s logic frustrates many a search for truth.

—Contributing writer Ray Wisher is a Florida detective.

tions. Our legal system does sometimes put other goods—such as fairness and liberty—above the search for the truth. The Fifth Amendment protection against compelled self-incrimination comes to mind (although part of the rationale is that coerced confessions are not reliably true). And the common law has long recognized certain privileges, like attorney-client and doctor-patient, that also interfere with truth-finding. It's a balancing act: trying to punish the guilty versus protecting the innocent.

BUT JUST AS THE PREVAILING VIEW of the legal profession has swung against truth-finding in recent decades, so too have the rules of criminal procedure. The most detrimental developments in this regard have been two Warren Court decisions: *Mapp v. Ohio* and *Miranda v. Arizona.* The former imposed upon all state courts the exclusionary rule: Evidence seized illegally cannot be admitted at trial. The latter decision mandated that all policemen must read suspects their rights before interrogation; failure to comply is punished by

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JUST AS THE PREVAILING VIEW OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION HAS SWUNG AGAINST TRUTH-FINDING, SO TOO HAVE THE RULES OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE.

excluding the resulting confession at trial. These are both radical departures from the common law tradition.

What price have we paid for making probative evidence inadmissible? Defenders of the system like Dershowitz claim that the impact of the exclusionary rule and *Miranda* has been minimal. But Paul Cassell, a law professor at the University of Utah, has conducted careful studies which show that *Miranda*, for one, resulted in a marked decrease in the number of crimes solved by police. Cassell estimates that 4 percent of criminal cases are lost due to *Miranda* alone, resulting in 28,000 cases against violent suspects and 79,000 cases against suspects in property crimes being dismissed every year. Cassell estimates that a roughly similar number of suspects receive reduced jail time because of these rulings.

Civil libertarians think this is a price worth paying to prevent rogue cops from preying upon the innocent. But it's hard to see how *Miranda* or *Mapp* does much to protect an innocent person—say a black motorist unjustly pulled over or a homeowner whose privacy is illegally violated. By definition there's no evidence to be excluded against a genuinely innocent person, no confession to be thrown out. Only the criminal benefits from the exclusion of evidence, and the bigger his crime the greater the benefit. Is there a deterrent effect to these rules? Perhaps, but bad men with badges are a lot more likely to be deterred by the prospect of being thrown in jail. The only people punished when evidence is excluded from trial are the victims of the criminal who will be set free.

The exclusionary rule and other procedural complications frustrate the search for justice another way: They make it extremely difficult and expensive to hold a trial, the principal fact-finding forum of our legal system. If any defense lawyer can tie a trial into knots, the incentive is to avoid a trial altogether. The result is that well over 90 percent of criminal cases are plea bargained instead. Plea bargains are a bonus for guilty defendants—they receive less jail time than they deserve—and a nightmare for the genuinely innocent: They can be bludgeoned by overzealous prosecutors into pleading guilty rather than face a longer sentence after trial. If trials were streamlined so that they focused more on the truth and less on endless procedural haggles, the courts might do a better job of sorting out the guilty from the innocent.

While pro-defendant rules frustrate the search for truth in criminal trials, in civil trials the problem is just the opposite: pro-plaintiff rules. Or rather lack of rules. Since the tort revolution of the 1950s and '60s, judges have placed few limits on the kind of cases that plaintiffs' lawyers can take to the jury. The result has been an explosion of litigation, with even many factually weak cases resulting in big-bucks awards because the plaintiffs' lawyers have been able to engage the sympathy of the jurors.

One of the chief problems lies in the mass torts field, which has given us hundreds of thousands of suits over products ranging from Agent Orange to breast implants to tobacco to (lately) guns. When lawyers flood the courts with so many cases, it's unlikely that many of them will be judged on the merits. The more likely outcome is that a corporate defendant will have to settle simply to avoid the cost of litigation and the possibility, however remote, of a break-the-bank verdict.

Thus we have the spectacle of the major tobacco companies agreeing to a $240 billion settlement to compensate the states for the supposed costs of tobacco-related illness. This, despite the fact that all leading empirical studies, for example those conducted by Harvard's W. Kip Viscusi, agree that tobacco actually saves the government money by hastening smokers' deaths. But no tobacco company was willing to test this admittedly macabre defense before a jury, in no small part because a loss could have resulted in bankruptcy.

Amid all this gloomy news, there are some signs of a backlash against falsehood in the courtroom. Take the attack on "junk science," which has introduced jurors to phantom phenomena ranging from chronic fatigue syndrome to "chemical AIDS" to recovered memory. In *Daubert v. Merrill Dow* (1993), the U.S. Supreme Court ordered judges to become "gatekeepers" to keep such pseudo-scientific twaddle out of the courtroom.

Federal Judge Sam C. Pointer Jr., overseeing the consolidated breast implant litigation, took up the challenge by appointing a panel of four experts to study the evidence surrounding breast implants. They unanimously concluded in December that no evidence exists of a link between implants and the various systemic ills claimed by plaintiffs. Too bad that finding came three years too late to keep Dow Corning out of bankruptcy. But if other judges take their responsibilities as seriously as Judge Pointer has, junk science might suffer a serious setback.

The criminal arena also has some encouraging trends. The Rehnquist Court, for instance, has poked a few holes in the exclusionary rulings, although the justices have refused to overturn those precedents altogether. Akhil Amar, a liberal Yale law professor, sees a broader revolt brewing against the Warren Court's emphasis on proceduralism over truth-finding.

Amar thinks a new tough-on-crime attitude is spreading even within the academy, notwithstanding the ever-present excesses of Critical Race Studies and other "progressive" movements. He says that feminists—some of whom have already made common cause with religious conservatives over pornography—are now being drawn into the war on crime because of issues like rape and child abuse. "In the 1960s we saw a celebration of defendants, who were seen as poor and black. Now what even we on the left see is that the victims of crime are poor too, they're black too," Amar told me. "You don't do racial or gender or class justice when you let those guys get away with victimizing people."

If that viewpoint takes hold among the next generation of lawyers, perhaps the case of the Truth vs. the Law will be dismissed for lack of cause.

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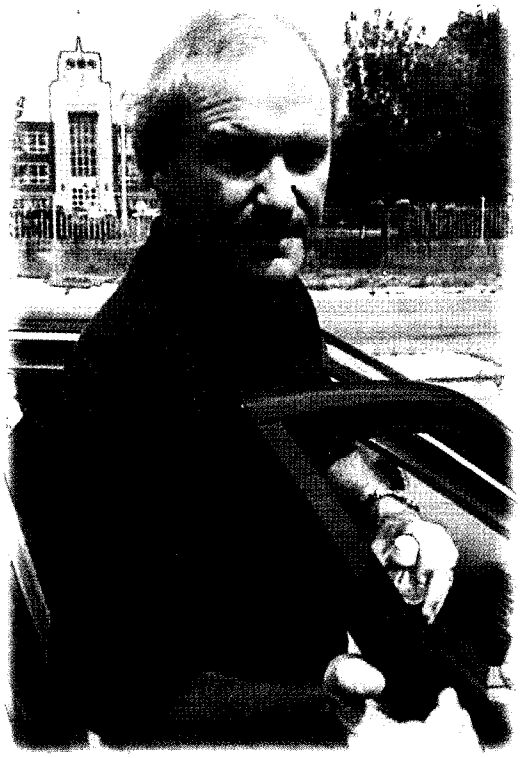
MEDIA FAKES

WHAT'S BEHIND TODAY'S TROUBLING EPIDEMIC OF FALSIFIED JOURNALISM?



AP Photo/Steven Senne

LATE IN THE SPRING of 1998, 4,000 teenagers dressed in their most outrageous clothing lined up in New York's Times Square for the chance to become a celebrity. MTV, the cable entertainment colossus, had announced that it would fulfill the dream of one lucky slacker and make him a video jockey. The network whittled down the several thousand applicants to six and, at last, a winner emerged. He called himself Jesse Camp. He spoke in a series of high-pitched shouts (*Entertainment Weekly* called him "pre-verbal"), barely seemed able to hold a coherent conversation and dressed in outrageous combinations of rags, jewelry, and hip-hop attire. He told viewers that he was a homeless boy who came from "sorta nowhere and sorta everywhere." He said he ate out of garbage cans. He claimed he'd fled to the Big Apple to escape a tyrannical home life and get into the music scene. This life story and Camp's street-wise attitude won him the part, and Camp experienced an incredible rise to fame. Incredible because hardly anything he said was true.

BARNICLE COMPLETELY MADE UP A HEART-RENDING STORY ABOUT TWO BOYS IN A HOSPITAL'S CANCER WARD.

Jesse's real name is Josh. He comes, as he eventually admitted grudgingly to an Associated Press reporter, from the wealthy Hartford suburb of Granby, Connecticut, and attended the tony Loomis Chaffee School. There, he played Hamlet on stage (fairly well by most accounts) and took demanding courses. His parents—a college professor and a school principal—spent lavishly on his education and took him to Europe nearly every summer while he was a child. Even trivial parts of the story Camp told were made up, for instance the extra sister he added to his family.

When music magazines launched follow-up investigations into Camp's background, they found out how much he lied. The consequences came with great speed: Camp admitted to his lies but didn't apologize, was moved to an even more prominent position in MTV, and signed a record deal in the six figures. MTV itself doesn't have anything to say about Camp. Four calls placed to its Manhattan publicity offices were not returned, and Camp did not respond to a personal letter and phone messages left with his assistant.

A similar deception was recently uncovered involving a hot new teen actress and screenwriter named Riley Weston. After writing and appearing in an episode of the new WB Network drama "Felicity," the "19-year-old home-schooled" prodigy was signed by Disney to a $300,000 contract for more teen shows. Then in late 1998 it was learned she is actually a young-looking 32-year-old divorcée named Kimberlee Kramer, who had hoped lying would be her path to fame and fortune. "Her teen-scribe act was a hoax, and it duped two major studios, one powerful talent agency, and at least two news organizations," summarized the *Wall Street Journal.*

EVEN MORE DISTURBING evidence that truth may have lost some of its currency in the media and popular culture comes from recent examples in the world of serious journalism. Consider the case of Stephen Glass.

The lies Glass told were far more numerous and far graver in their implications than anything Camp or Kramer ever attempted. But just as their lies earned them adoration among slackers, Glass's mendacious writings brought him wide admiration from earnest intellectuals. Just three years out of the University of Pennsylvania he had an income estimated at

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Stephen Glass

$150,000, and wrote in leading national publications about topics ranging from presidential friend Vernon Jordan to phone psychics. He worked as an associate editor of *The New Republic* during the day and churned out stories for magazines like *Rolling Stone, George,* and *Harper's* in the evenings. After *Forbes Digital Tool* discovered Glass had made up a story about hackers, *New Republic* editor Charles Lane fired him and ordered a full investigation of his stories.

It turned out Glass had completely fabricated scores of sources, quotations, and facts. In the end, most of his articles had to be wholly retracted, and official apologies for serious defamations, misstatements, and inaccuracies were issued. The DARE anti-drug program, which Glass had attacked with made-up evidence, has slapped him with a law suit. It's unlikely Glass will get a chance to write again in the future, though he has so far escaped any serious penalty. Georgetown Law School, where he was attending classes, has let him continue his legal studies even though he clearly violated the ethics code in the school's policy manual.

STAR BOSTON GLOBE columnist Mike Barnicle is another journalist who lied repeatedly and emerged with his career intact. Barnicle's incredible human-interest stories often attracted the attention of local media watchers, who began to suspect him of writing fiction under the guise of reporting on numerous occasions. Finally, last summer Barnicle appeared to be caught plagiarizing a book by comedian George Carlin. Barnicle claimed he'd received the material from a bartender and had never seen Carlin's book—a claim that came into question when a tape was found of Barnicle recommending the book on a television show. After much dissembling, it appeared Barnicle would survive at the *Globe.*

Then evidence emerged that Barnicle had made up a heart-rending story about two young boys, one black, the other white, who became friendly in a hospital's cancer ward. According to Barnicle's detailed account, the white family eventually mailed the black family $10,000 to rescue them from bankruptcy. *Reader's Digest* editor in chief Ken Tomlinson had wanted to reprint the article in his magazine, until fact checkers discovered there were no such children or families. Tomlinson killed the *Digest's* story without divulging why.

When the *Globe* agreed to keep Barnicle on staff even after the Carlin plagiarism, Tomlinson decided to share his information with Barnicle's editors. Confronted with this evidence, Barnicle made up fresh lies about getting his story from a nurse (whose name, of course, he could not remember). To this day, Barnicle continues to dissemble.

Barnicle was finally fired by the *Globe* and took an indefinite leave from the TV station where he also contributed. Soon, however, Barnicle was back on the air. He remarked only that "it's great to be back" after a few "very strange months," and mentioned some "health problems." Apparently Barnicle's "strangeness" didn't trouble Channel 5 station manager Paul LaCamera, who called his reporter a "uniquely gifted writer and storyteller." Aside from explaining that the program Barnicle contributes to deals with softer "lifestyle" stories, the station declined to answer any of *TAE*'s questions. Barnicle also got his byline back into print when the *New York Daily News* announced it had hired him as a columnist. His new editor Michael Kramer—a former editor at the self-proclaimed media watchdog magazine *Brill's Content*—conceded Barnicle did wrong but told *TAE* he was prepared to move beyond that. Making up stories was "something that [Barnicle] did up there. I'm sure he won't make the same mistakes here." Besides, "if everyone in journalism who made a mistake couldn't work anymore, then none of us would have jobs."

AP Photo/HO

Kimberlee Kramer

For the *Boston Globe*, meanwhile, Barnicle's case was actually the second time in a matter of months a star writer had had to be fired for making things up. Earlier, the paper learned columnist Patricia Smith had produced multiple quotes and at least one entire column that she was later forced to admit were fiction. Smith had been awarded the American Society of Newspaper Editors' Distinguished Writing Award just a few months earlier.

Yet a third star writer for the *Globe*, Eileen McNamara, awarded a Pulitzer in 1997 for "commentary," came under a cloud that same year for apparently faking an important column. McNamara sharply criticized some participants in a conference she presented herself as reporting from at the Peabody Essex Museum. That was where press releases sent out in advance said events would take place, but in fact the affair was moved at the last moment to a hotel instead, proving McNamara was not actually there. After being caught in this deception by the investigative newsletter *CounterPunch*, McNamara refused to return phone calls from reporters.

THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER high-profile cases in the media recently that didn't involve actual fakery but rather extreme carelessness bordering on dishonesty. For instance, the "Dark Alliance" series published by the *San Jose Mercury News* in late-1996. These stories alleged that CIA operatives working with Nicaraguan *contras* had started the crack epidemic in America's inner cities. Other news organizations launched investigations to try to substantiate reporter Gary Webb's claims and could not. By mid-1997, Webb had resigned and the *Mercury News* retracted nearly all of the stories' allegations. Disturbingly, though, Webb published a book repeating the retracted claims which became popular among left-leaning conspiracy theorists and began to show up in college curricula.

Likewise, CNN and *Time* reported in 1998—just when the United States was pressuring Saddam Hussein to forswear production of nerve gases—that American Special Forces had used nerve gas to kill American traitors in Vietnam. Both CNN and *Time* had to retract the story a few weeks later. CNN's internal investigation, conducted by famed First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams, found that the tale's two producers, April Oliver and

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THE NEW JOURNALISM IS A SWAMP IN A WAY THAT THE OLDER STYLE WASN'T.

Jack Smith, had become true believers who selectively interpreted evidence, used unreliable sources, and failed to present contrary views. (A parallel *Time* investigation came to similar conclusions, and the magazine's managing editor offered a public apology.) Oliver and Smith lost their jobs; CNN star reporter Peter Arnett, who actually presented the story on air and co-authored the *Time* print version, got off with a slap on the wrist. "They would never fire a big star like that," Oliver complains to *TAE*.

Oliver insists that "We were convenient scapegoats, nothing more," and that CNN "simply decided that it was too much trouble to defend the story." The Abrams investigation, on the other hand, concluded that CNN and *Time* aired some sensationally irresponsible lies. In either case, the tale shows the nation's leading cable news source and its leading news magazine exhibiting scant regard for truth.

A little earlier, NBC News exhibited the same sorts of zealotry, carelessness, and dishonesty. Often called the most respected network TV news organization, NBC broadcast a notorious report showing GM pickups exploding, which later proved to have been filmed using small bomb-like devices implanted by NBC technicians.

The recent canon of mendacity goes on and on, alas. Prominent writers including Molly Ivins and Ruth Shalit have been caught in incidents of plagiarism and emerged with little damage. An ABC News investigation of the Food Lion grocery stores, *Cincinnati Enquirer* coverage of Chiquita Brands International, and a *Business Week* story on credit bureaus have all been tainted by dishonest representations made by the reporters involved. Several of these stories have ended in court rulings unfavorable to the press entity in question.

IT'S ACTUALLY HARD TO FIND a media watcher today who disagrees with the idea that media lies and fakes have spun out of control in recent years. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ron Powers argues that changing cultural standards have diminished the press's reverence for truth. "For much of the media, truth has lost its centrality," he says. "In literature, postmodernism has disputed the operability of objective truth. In the social sciences the same thing has happened as relativism has taken over the disciplines. Journalists aren't directly affected by these trends but they do filter down. There's a much more receptive attitude towards mixing fact and fiction."

Even observers who take a slightly more optimistic attitude tend to agree lying is too widespread in today's media culture. "It could be only that people are finding more errors, because I think that there have always been quite a few fakes going around," says Brent Baker, vice president of the Media Research Center. "But there is certainly a perception that fakes are on the rise, and it has some truth to it."

William Powers, a media critic for the *National Journal* who is not related to Ron Powers, also thinks that media lies are widespread. "I would suspect that there are many [media liars] out there who we just aren't catching. There are all of these columnists who use lots of first-name-only sources and other things that just can't be tracked down. A lot of them are probably making things up," he says.

In searching for the causes of this epidemic of mendacity, every media watcher *TAE* spoke with pointed to changes in the way the media operates. Although American history is rich in journalistic celebrities ranging from Dorothy Parker to Walter Winchell, becoming a journalistic celebrity in past eras took time and effort. Now a proliferation of news channels, talk shows, Web sites, and magazines require an increasing number of opinionated people who look good, sound good, or write with flair. "I think you are seeing the incredible appetite that cable TV and magazines have for 'talent,'" says Wesley Pruden, editor in chief of the *Washington Times*. "A lot of people are getting put into positions of responsibility before they have the training or maturity or judgment to be there."

William Powers agrees. "You have an incredible emphasis on opinion and analysis and a lot of people just aren't getting the training they once had on city desks. Younger writers can just be vaulted to positions of responsibility without having to do much beforehand." Pruden expresses a mixed nostalgia for tyrannical city editors who whipped young journalists into shape. "There was something valuable about having a story thrown back in my face time after time until [an editor at the *Arkansas Gazette*] finally sat down with me and went over it."

A newsroom culture that rewards certain kinds of stories, even when they don't fit conventional standards of attribution and checking, may also play a role in letting lies get through the cracks. "There's a certain kind of story that I can't really define," says William Powers. "It's a story that really gets readers and editors to perk up, and while I was at the *New Republic* Stephen Glass was getting them all the time. We just figured that he had an exceptional talent." Incredible stories like the ones Glass spun often rely on anonymous sources, which are used more heavily now than in the past, to the dismay of some traditional journalists.

In a world where culture and media have trivialized truth, media watchers place some hope in their ability to monitor their own trade. Ron Powers, however, argues that there's very little media critics or others can do and takes a defeatist attitude toward stemming the tide of media lies in the short run. "We're comfortable, secure, and affluent," he says, "while there's a great increase in the pressures that cause the media to distort things. It's not something we can do a lot about."

William Powers and Pruden, however, express some hope. "The police officer aspect of my work is maybe only 25 percent of what I do," says media critic Powers. "But it makes a difference. Monitoring can't do everything, but it's one of the better defenses we have." Pruden has confidence in the power of the market. "If a columnist or newspaper continually lies or makes mistakes, it will lose its readers," he says. "Honesty makes sense."

One thing is clear: Today's reporting needs to be read with a great deal of skepticism and vigilance. As Thomas Patterson, Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press at Harvard, recently told the *American Journalism Review*, "Journalism has moved away from a descriptive style to an analytic model." Sometimes, he warned, "the story line gets assembled first," and facts are collected second, if at all. "That kind of journalism is a swamp in a way that the older style wasn't."

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UNTRUTH IN ACADEME

AP Photo/Beberto Matthews

DAVID STOLL, an assistant professor at Middlebury College, doesn't seem like the kind of person who would be unsympathetic to Rigoberta Menchu. Menchu's autobiographical account of the civil war in Guatemala earned her adulation from the political Left, status as an international icon of the "peace and social justice" movement, and eventually the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize. Her book is a staple on campus reading lists, and a reported 15,000 mostly adulatory theses have so far been written about her life story. Meanwhile, Stoll is an anthropologist at a liberal arts college and a self-described "social democrat" skeptical of capitalism. As a graduate student at Stanford he focused on human rights violations by the Guatemalan government. Today, though, Stoll is being assailed as a racist and enemy of the people by Menchu and her allies on U.S. campuses—all because he had the temerity to tell the truth.

Stoll's book, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*—which he describes as a "left-wing critique of political correctness"—catalogs a devastating list of exaggerations and fabrications in Menchu's famous book. Her "life story" told the tale of how her family and other poor Indian peasants fought to maintain their land against wealthy landowners of European descent. In reality, this supposed grand struggle between haves and have-nots turns out to have been a family dispute between Menchu's land-rich father and his own (Indian) in-laws. It also turns out that a brother she said she saw starve to death is alive and well-off today in Guatemala. And Menchu's claim that she had never received any formal education and could not read or write Spanish until adulthood is bunk, too. She, in fact, attended two private boarding schools.

ACADEMICS BECAME OUTRAGED—NOT AT MENCHU FOR LYING, BUT AT STOLL FOR UNCOVERING THE TRUTH.

When these bombshell revelations became public, academics became outraged—not at Menchu, but at Stoll for uncovering the truth. "Whether her book is true or not, I don't care. We should teach our students about the brutality of the Guatemalan army and the U.S. financing of it," fumed Wellesley College professor Marjorie Agosin to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. "I think Rigoberta Menchu has been used by the Right to negate the very important space that multiculturalism is providing in academia." Joanne Rappaport, president of the Society for Latin American Anthropology, told the *Chronicle* Stoll's book is "an attempt to discredit one of the only spokespersons of Guatemala's indigenous movement." John Peeler of Bucknell downplayed Menchu's lies: "The Latin American tradition of the testimonial has never been bound by the strict rules of veracity that we take for granted in autobiography." Most professors insisted they would continue using Menchu's books in their classrooms. And the Nobel Prize Committee defended Menchu, saying "All autobiographies embellish to a greater or lesser extent."

This embarrassing episode is only the latest instance of epidemic lying in the ivory tower. From Afrocentric claims of Cleopatra's being black to phony feminist statistics on rape, anorexia, and discriminatory treatment of girls, academia has in recent years been beset by revelations of fraudulent facts and

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BY KENNETH LEE

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ONE CAN NO LONGER ASSUME THAT SIMPLY EXPOSING A FALSEHOOD WILL GET IT OUT OF CIRCULATION.

spurious studies. Even more worrying, many professors have decided to turn a deaf ear when these lies have been exposed. That university instructors—who profess to devote their lives to the uncovering of truth and the promotion of critical thinking—tolerate and even promote these untruths is evidence that, as former '60s radical David Horowitz puts it, "the American university is at its lowest intellectual ebb in history."

ROGER KIMBALL, managing editor at *The New Criterion* and author of *Tenured Radicals*, places the blame at the feet of so-called postmodern ideology. "This ultimately traces back to the popularity of deconstructionists like Michel Foucault," he explains. "Foucault believed that there is no such thing as objective truth—there are only power relations. And what we for convenience call 'truth' is really just the expression of a particular political relationship."

If political power is the most important element in society, then being untruthful is not terribly wrong if it helps "your" side gain power. This postmodern playing with facts has thoroughly infected feminist arguments about the oppression of women. On most college campuses, professors repeat the mantra, "one in four girls is a victim of rape or attempted rape." Yet as Christina Hoff Sommers has shown, this claim is deeply flawed. In the survey from which it is derived, 73 percent of the girls counted as rape victims said that they were not *aware* at the time that they had been raped. A similar untruth much bruited about on campus is the "fact" that 150,000 women die of anorexia every year. Actually, official statistics show that 150,000 women suffer from the disease but only about 100 women die each year from it.

When figures like these are traced back to their sources and refuted, professors often fall back on the defense that while their specific numbers may not be wholly accurate, they nevertheless represent the "larger truth" that society mistreats women. Stoll's exposé of Rigoberta Menchu elicited this very reaction among academics. Professor Agosin of Wellesley justified the lies this way: "Even if she didn't watch her little brother being murdered, the military did murder people in Guatemala." Professor Allen Carey-Webb of Western Michigan University similarly stressed the importance of seeing the 'larger truth': "We have a higher standard of truth for poor people like Rigoberta Menchu. If we find a flaw in her, it doesn't mean her whole argument goes down the drain."

Other academics showed more concern for protecting Menchu's political cause than for the realities of the case. Harvard professor Kay B. Warren told the *Chronicle*: "What I worry about is that this controversy may be used to undermine the findings of the truth commission and deflect attention away from attempts to reform the army."

David Horowitz scoffs at the notion of a larger truth justifying lies. "This is the Tawana Brawley defense—when she was lying, she was really telling the truth," he says, referring to the young black woman who falsely claimed to have been raped by some white men in upstate New York, and who continued to enjoy activist support even after her falsehoods were exposed. Adds Roger Kimball, "This is what George Orwell once referred to as newspeak. Once you go down that road, where do you stop?"

Professor Alan Kors of the University of Pennsylvania finds these rationalizations disturbing. "If the academic world tolerates lies and misrepresentations because it likes the broader message, then we are truly in difficult times. That the American academic world would embrace the lies knowing that they are lies is appalling," he says. Menchu's book "is not presented as a work of fiction but as a work of non-fiction. We should ask for truth in advertising." How many workers outside of academic fields could get away with claiming that facts are not as important as "larger truths," asks Kors?

IN SOME CASES, intellectuals' cavalier attitude toward the truth can be attributed as much to laziness, greed, or self-aggrandizement as to bias. Swiss newspapers and then "60 Minutes" recently revealed that one of the most famous books about surviving the Holocaust—Binjamin Wilkomirski's *Fragments*—is actually a hoax by a compulsive liar who was neither sent to Majdanek and then Auschwitz as a child, nor even born a Jew or Russian, as he claimed. Translated into more than a dozen languages, the book was described by Britain's *Manchester Guardian* as "one of the great works of the Holocaust." The *New York Times* raved about its melding of "a poetic vision with the magic of a child's innocence." Asked how the literary world could have been so gravely duped, one expert concluded, "the editors and the reviewers and the prize juries [are] terribly ignorant." Because an elegiac story of victimization has so much appeal to contemporary intellectuals, skepticism seems to have been suspended.

"Doing real historical work and ascertaining what has happened requires a lot of patient scholarly work," explains Roger Kimball. In cases like Wilkomirski's and Menchu's where there is a convenient political moral to the story, it is tempting to dispense with this hard work. Lots of partisans prefer to simply believe convenient fables rather than test them. "If you have a magic ideological formula that allows you to reduce any historical phenomenon to the same scenario of oppression or whatever, then it's much easier to proceed," says Kimball.

These sorts of mistakes and falsehoods are encouraged by the single-mindedness of the modern college faculty. In the cases of both willful untruths and untruths of sloppiness "the problem is the political homogeneity of the professoriate," says Dinesh D'Souza, author of *Illiberal Education*. D'Souza tells *TAE* such embarrassments could be avoided if university faculty better represented national opinion. "If you had ideological diversity, then you would have prejudices cutting all ways and you would have a natural corrective. You'd have all of them attacking each other whenever they strayed from reality."

DAVID HOROWITZ argues that the recent campus plagues of untruth are "a secondary symptom of the larger problem, which is the infiltration and subsequent domination of the academy by the Left." For "the Left can only exist in this

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Lies from a Campus Icon

AP Photo/Tyler Mallory

WHAT IS IT WITH PROGRESSIVES? Why do they feel the need to lie so relentlessly about who they are? Recently it was feminist icon Betty Friedan's turn to be revealed as a fibber.

In his new biography, *Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminine Mystique*, Smith College professor Daniel Horowitz (no relation) establishes beyond doubt that the woman who has always presented herself as a typical suburban housewife until she began work on her groundbreaking book was in fact nothing of the kind. In fact, under her maiden name, Betty Goldstein, she was an activist and professional propagandist for the Communist Left for over a decade before the publication of *The Feminine Mystique* launched the modern women's movement.

Professor Horowitz documents that Friedan was, from her college days until her mid-thirties, a Stalinist Marxist, a political intimate of leaders of American Communists, and for a time even the lover of a young Communist physicist working on atomic bomb projects with J. Robert Oppenheimer. Her famous description of America's suburban family household as "a comfortable concentration camp" therefore had more to do with her Marxist hatred for America than with any of her actual experience as a housewife or mother. (Her husband, Carl, also a leftist, once complained that his wife "was in the world during the whole marriage," had a full-time maid, and "seldom was a wife and a mother.")

It is fascinating that Friedan not only felt the need to lie about her real views and life experience then, but still feels the need to lie about them now. Although her new biographer is himself a sympathetic leftist, Friedan refused to cooperate and began to malign him once she realized he was going to tell the truth about her life as Betty Goldstein.

This reminded me of a C-SPAN "Booknotes" program on which Brian Lamb asked historian Eric Foner about his father, Jack. Foner claimed that Jack Foner was a man "with a social conscience" who made his living through public lectures and who, along with his brothers Phil and Moe, was persecuted during the McCarthy era. When Lamb asked Foner why they were persecuted, Foner responded that his father had supported the loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War. But no one was actually persecuted for siding with the Spanish Republic in the Spanish Civil War. The Foner brothers were actually fairly famous Communists, one a Communist party labor historian and another a Communist party union organizer and leader. It is a fact that, on orders from Moscow, Communist-controlled unions in the CIO opposed the Marshall Plan's effort to rebuild Western Europe. The Marshall Plan, it should be recalled, was in part designed to prevent Stalin's empire from absorbing Western Europe as it had its satellites in the east. That's why socialists like Walter Reuther purged the reds from the CIO and also why Communists like Foner's uncle came under FBI scrutiny—i.e., why they were "persecuted" in the McCarthy era.

That Communists, like the Foners and Betty Friedan, lied at the time was understandable. They had something to hide. But why are they and their children lying to this day?

The reason is this: The truth is too embarrassing. Imagine what it would be like for Betty Friedan as a Jew to admit that she opposed America's entry into the war against Hitler because her Party told her that it was just an inter-imperialist fracas? Imagine what it would be like for America's premier feminist to acknowledge that well into her thirties she thought Stalin was the Father of the Peoples, and that the United States was an evil empire, and that her interest in women's liberation was just a subtext of her real desire to create a Soviet America. No, those kinds of revelations don't help a person who is concerned about her public image.

Which is why it probably has seemed better just to lie about this all these years. The problem, however, is that lying can't be contained. It begets other lies, and eventually becomes a whole way of life.

The example of Betty Friedan should be a wake-up call to the rest of us to insist that people be candid about their politics and about calling things by their right names.

—This is adapted from David Horowitz's Salon *column of January 18, 1999.*

country in an atmosphere where it can control the conversation, and the university is the perfect place because it's not a democratic institution—it's a feudal institution. Once you are in a position of authority, you rule by fiat."

Horowitz draws from his own experiences as a socialist radical to argue that "leftism is a crypto-religion. It is at odds with social facts, and has been for 200 years." But that doesn't matter because "to the Left, the alternative [to their worldview] is unthinkable. They are inside a community of faith and to leave it would mean leaving every friend you had, and joining the people you thought were evil. It would drain your life of all its meaning. So the Left has deep blinders" that keep it from accepting controverting evidence of all sorts.

Horowitz suggests that today's lying epidemics and radi-

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IF COLLEGE FACULTIES HAD IDEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, THERE WOULD BE A NATURAL CORRECTIVE.

cal discounting of the idea of truth may have been inevitable as the intellectual foundations of socialism crumbled during the twentieth century. "As it became apparent that everything that progressives had put their hearts into was a monster lie, the move became obvious. Deconstruct the truth and say there is no truth. That's when they became relativists." Professor Kors agrees: "With the failure of socialism to achieve what the intellectual Left believed it would, radicals were faced with two choices: Change their views in the face of the data, or deny the importance of data and reality. They have chosen the latter in alarming numbers."

Kors sees another alarming trend: "A growing number of 'in' fields are being defined by large presuppositions" based on quasi-Marxist oppression theories. So "if your presuppositions do not fit with these, then you have no scholarly status," he warns. "Instead of debate and competition of ideas, a larger number of fields are inhibiting or forbidding debate except among competing theories of oppression."

The Education of Little Tree is a salient example of how ideology can blind academics to the truth. Billed as a factual memoir of a Native American orphan who grew up to confront immense racism and other obstacles, the book's pro-environmental message and multicultural flavor won plaudits from academics. Rennard Strickland of Southern Illinois University, for example, praised the work as "one of those rare books like *Huck Finn* that each new generation needs to discover."

Yet it turned out the story was a terrible hoax. The real author, as uncovered in the *New York Times* in 1991, was Asa Carter, a notorious racist who had penned George Wallace's infamous "Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" speech and in fact considered Wallace to be too liberal. According to his fellow-segregationist brother, Doug Carter, Asa wrote *Little Tree* as a form of "creative writing." The University of New Mexico Press, which published the book, however, stood by the lies. A spokesman told the *Los Angeles Times*, "The question we have to ask is: Was the book that was beautiful and superb yesterday now horrible and awful? The book hasn't changed." Although Doug Carter has said that his brother maintained his racist beliefs to his deathbed, Lawrence Clayton, a dean at Hardin-Simmons University, flatly refused to accept that a racist wrote the book as a hoax. "Carter created a fictitious life for himself and lived it. In years here, he became Little Tree. I think he just turned his back on his earlier life," said Clayton. Professor Strickland insisted Asa Carter's real identity is "a matter that doesn't concern or disturb me very much. The book seems to me to ring very true."

ANOTHER EXAMPLE of academic refusal to discard a convenient text even after its factual basis has been undermined is the case of Mike Davis. A former member of the Communist party, Davis is a recent recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award, and has taught at UCLA and the Southern California Institute of Architecture. He gained fame for his dystopian, Marxist analysis of Los Angeles, *City of Quartz*. In it, he paints a picture of a Los Angeles power elite trying to zone-away the minority poor, a city where whites have sheltered themselves in fortress-like business buildings downtown and in gated communities outside the city. The book is taught in college planning and urban design courses everywhere and was recently selected by some academics as "one of the top 100 journalism pieces of the twentieth century" (ahead of works like Edward R. Murrow's report on the liberation of Buchenwald).

Unlike many academics, Davis doesn't hide his political agenda at all. "The thing you have to understand about these books is I'm a socialist. This book has an utterly radical political agenda, no holds barred," he told the *New York Times*. Tendentiousness is the least of his problems, though; the greater flaw in his scholarship is that much of what he says just isn't true. His errors, ranging from the trivial to the egregious, have recently been shown to be plentiful. For instance, he explains how Los Angeles businessman Howard Ahmanson was "despised for his Jewishness" by the power elite, which is odd, given that Ahmanson is an evangelical Christian. He describes how the city elite removed pedestrian sidewalks and erected giant steel building doors in downtown L.A. in hopes of keeping poor racial minorities away. Trouble is, those ominous steel doors turn out not to exist, while those allegedly missing sidewalks do exist. Davis exaggerates wildly to suit his political needs. He claims that there are 2,000 gated communities in Los Angeles; in reality, there are only 100.

An environmentalist ally of Davis recently described in the left-leaning *L.A. Weekly* how "I was amazed to discover he'd fabricated an entire interview with me: We were standing together at the Fremont Gate entrance to Elysian Park, a place I'd never been, and I showed him a 'dog-eared 1890s topographical map prepared for City Engineer J. H. Dockweler,' a document that I'd never heard of.... Though we'd never actually talked, the words he put in my mouth made me sound like I knew a lot more about the Los Angeles River than I actually did."

"Whenever he needs a 'fact' to bolster some preformulated hypothesis, rather than going to all the messy bother of actually hunting down and picking them, he simply grows his own, and then assigns whatever moderately plausible footnote happens to be lying around," warns Brady Westwater, who first discovered many of Davis's fabrications and then exposed them on his Web site.

Has this revelation of fraud brought Davis ignominy in academic circles? Quite the opposite. The State University of New York at Stony Brook wooed him for months and recently hired him to become a professor in the history department. Gary Marker, chairman of the department, defends Davis's appointment. The school had heard of Davis's inaccuracies and fabrications before it hired him, Marker told *TAE*, but "those claims [of falsehoods] were made by real estate agents and journalists" while "all the academic commentary was complimentary." He adds, "If serious academics in his field raise the same concerns, then I'd be worried, but the journalistic criticisms I've seen don't keep me particularly concerned, just aware." And

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there you have the denouement of academic lies: Untruth doesn't matter as long as other academics don't fault you. Since so many of Davis's colleagues share his ideological prejudices and have a similarly slippery regard for truth, most won't complain about his scholarship any time soon. Thus do cloistered academics ignore evidence from outside the university, allowing lies to thrive within our ivory towers.

IT ISN'T JUST THAT truth-tellers get ignored within the academic world while fact-benders win "genius" awards and professorships. What's more worrisome is that those who blow the whistle on academics engaging in exaggerations and fabrications are often punished for their trouble.

When Stoll first began writing his book on Rigoberta Menchu, many of his colleagues discouraged him from pursuing the evidence because it challenged an icon of the Left. "I faced a lot of disapproval," admits Stoll. He also had difficulties finding a publisher for his meticulously researched book. And although Stoll goes out of his way to treat Menchu sympathetically, and refrains from calling her a liar, many academics have questioned his motives and miscast him as a conservative. "I'm questioning left-wing symbols not to help the Right but to help the Left to deal with issues it has to deal with," splutters an exasperated Stoll. "Attractive symbols like Rigoberta Menchu had their use but they could end up covering over problems."

KINSEY WANTED TO CHANGE OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX, SO HE CREATED THE DATA THAT HE WANTED.

Corbis/Bettman

Other researchers have toiled for years under academia's distaste for inconvenient truths. Take Dr. Judith Reisman. For nearly 20 years, she has questioned the truthfulness of much of the data in Alfred C. Kinsey's *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, the book which launched the sexual revolution by providing seemingly scientific rationalizations for promiscuity, child sexuality, homosexuality, and many forms of sexual experimentation. "Kinsey's scientific data wasn't flawed. It was fraudulent," says Reisman. "Kinsey wanted to change our sex attitudes and laws; so he created the data that he wanted. He also threw out three-quarters of the answers he didn't want to use. He picked who he wanted [as study subjects], and he lied about who he interviewed." Reisman notes that five-sixths of Kinsey's research subjects were aberrant males. Many were prisoners, 1,400 were sex offenders, and another 200 were male prostitutes.

Not surprisingly, Kinsey got the unconventional results he wanted. For example, he popularized the notion that 10 to 37 percent of the male population is gay. A recent and more reliable University of Chicago study disputes Kinsey's findings and suggests a more accurate figure is something like 3 or 4 percent. Others of Kinsey's findings are just plain bizarre: He argued that children are sexual beings who can enjoy orgasms even as infants.

Reisman's exposures of Kinsey's fraud, however, was almost completely ignored in academe. The professoriate wanted nothing to do with work that cast a shadow on a hero of sexual liberation. "I gave my first paper on Kinsey, called 'Child Sexuality or Sexual Abuse: A Possible Consideration of Ethics Violation,' in 1981 in Jerusalem, and I called for an investigation into Kinsey's research methods," explains Reisman. "I assumed that my colleagues were going to say, 'Oh my! We must investigate this!' I thought they'd be really upset. They were—but upset with *me*, not Kinsey." She recalls one colleague who approached her after she presented her paper. He didn't inquire about Kinsey's dubious research methods but instead complained to her that she was "going to set back sex education 20 years." Reisman now says, "I learned the hard way that most of them liked what Kinsey said and loved to promote his claims."

Today, however, after nearly two decades of lonely argument, Reisman is being vindicated. James H. Jones, a former member of the scientific board of advisers of Kinsey's institute, has recently written a devastating book on Kinsey confirming the fraudulent basis of many of the sexologist's claims. Yet even now many academics continue to cling to Kinsey's falsehoods, and to ignore Reisman's findings, even as Kinsey's credibility has been fatally damaged in the wider world.

Dinesh D'Souza believes it will often take an outside critic to purge the academic scene of a favored untruth or half-truth. The backlash against political correctness in the 1980s and early '90s, he notes, mostly originated off campus. And today, D'Souza believes, "a watchdog function exposing academic lies" is needed.

But as the troubling cases of Kinsey, Rigoberta Menchu, Mike Davis, and others demonstrate, one can no longer assume that simply exposing a falsehood will be enough to get it out of circulation. That is something the academic class will have to be forcefully shamed into.

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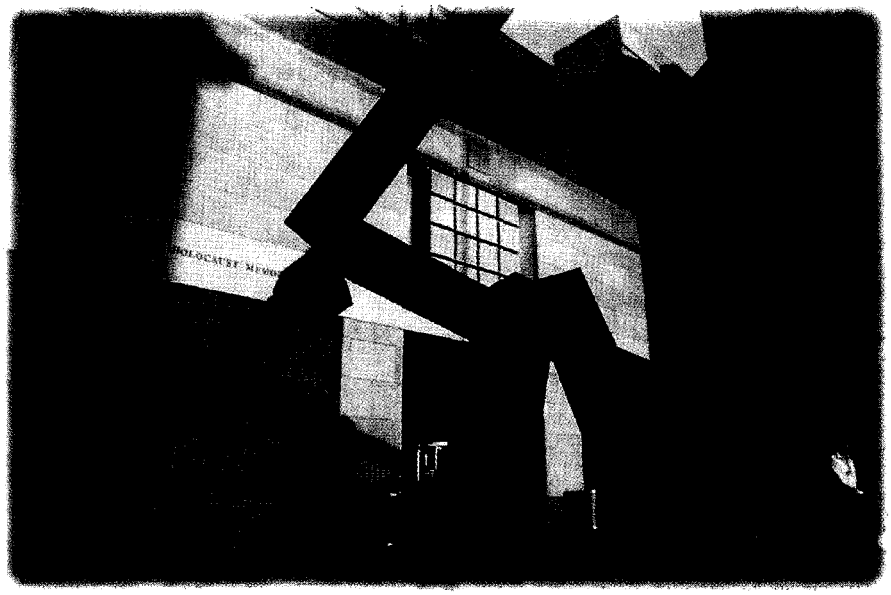
MISREPRESENTING THE HOLOCAUST



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IN FEBRUARY, President Clinton told the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. that "Adolf Hitler preached a perverted form of Christianity." That is patently untrue. Hitler was in fact an enemy of Christianity, and a pagan. Consider his 1933 statement that "It is through the peasantry that we shall really be able to destroy Christianity because there is in them a true religion rooted in nature and blood."

If Hitler was actually an anti-Christian, where did President Clinton get this characterization of the Führer as a kind of believing avenger? Perhaps, I am sad to say, from misrepresentations currently promoted in Holocaust museums and programs around the country.

As I find myself in the uncomfortable position of scrutinizing today's Holocaust remembrances, one obvious question is whether they actually discourage animus between people, as is their stated intent. Another question important to me as a rabbi is whether their teachings help or harm the Jewish people. And for me the answer to both of these questions is far from obvious.

Most of today's Holocaust exhibits have received funding from American taxpayers. Yet some citizens who initially supported them with good-hearted generosity now see them as promoting a hatred of Christians. I myself am concerned about presentations at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., for instance. This museum is simultaneously one of the world's most eloquent cries against prejudice and also a place which promotes anti-Christian propaganda. Although it was constructed with private funds, the museum occupies land donated by the American people, the most Christian nation on earth. Of course, the American forces who liberated the concentration camp were composed of mostly Christians as well. Therefore it is hard for me to understand why the producers of the film shown to Holocaust Museum visitors, a copy of which I have seen, seem so determined to devote much of the short documentary to untruths which denigrate Christianity.

While the historical role of the church in anti-Semitism is undeniable, is it just to focus only upon that—and utterly exclude discussion of Hitler's own rejection of the church and Stalin's virulent atheistic anti-Semitism? Not only Stalin is purged but the film implies that Christianity caused anti-Semitism to enter the world. Pharoah, Haman, the Roman, Greek, and Babylonian oppressions of the Jewish people are not considered by the filmmakers. For example, the video shown repeatedly to the crowds who throng to the museum leads the viewer to believe that Hitler considered himself to be acting as an agent of the Catholic church. Consider this line at the climax of the film: "Enter Adolf Hitler, Austrian born and baptized a Catholic." Imagine how we Jews would react to a Christian-presented film on the millions of victims of Communism in which the narrator solemnly intoned: *"Enter Karl Marx, born a Jew."* Surely Jews would be right to claim that this information, though undeniably true, was not crucial to the story and was thus intended to be hurtful. Not mentioned in the Holocaust museum's video is Hitler's all-consuming hatred of the Pope and Catholicism. Are we unintentionally causing resentment among Christians? Surely, that can be no help to Jews.

CONSIDER THESE WORDS which the above film attributes to Hitler himself: "In defending myself against the Jews, I am acting for the Lord. The difference between

BY [redacted]

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the church and me is that I am finishing the job." Although I am a student of World War II and am very familiar with many little-known details of Hitler's life, including his spiritual odyssey, and although I searched diligently, I was unable to locate this phrase among the records of Hitler's writings and speeches. At this writing, I have yet to find the source of these very words. Selecting this as *the* only clip of Hitler's rantings to be shown in the 15-minute film could justifiably be seen by Christians as an attack. How, exactly, is this slap supposed to help Jews?

In speaking of *Mein Kampf,* Konrad Heiden, the famed biographer of Hitler, stated that "the book may well be called a kind of satanic Bible. To the author—although he was shrewd enough not to state it explicitly himself...the belief in human equality is a kind of hypnotic spell exercised by world-conquering Judaism with the help of the Christian churches." In other words, Hitler saw Judaism and the Christian church on the same side of the battle—opposite him. He manipulated the deep wellsprings of anti-Semitism that existed in Europe, for which the church shares the blame, but he was not an agent of Christianity.

Today's Jewish schoolchildren should be inculcated with gratitude toward those Christians who suffered during the Holocaust in order to save Jewish lives. Yet the selfless role of these Christians is largely ignored. Those who did save Jews are called "Righteous Gentiles." I believe it is time to change that phrase for two reasons. One is that it implies an oxymoron, suggesting that we would not normally expect the two words to be found together. "Look here, I've found one—a real live righteous gentile!" (I wonder how we Jews might react to an annual award bestowed each year by a Christian organization on an "Honest Jewish Businessman.") Secondly, speaking of "Righteous Gentiles" does a disservice to those many Christians who saved Jews specifically *because* of their faith. They were "Righteous Christians," not "Righteous Gentiles." Far too few Jews understand that Christian values were often the very reason these unheralded heroes were willing to risk their lives.

There is one famous case in which the Jewish community enthusiastically jumped on the bandwagon to acknowledge a debt. That is the case of Oskar Schindler of *Schindler's List* fame. Gratitude is absolutely due him. But the energy expended to recognize his actions only reveals the lack of thanks to many others. Although I have declined to see the film, my understanding is that Mr. Schindler was not a particularly religious or, for that matter, a particularly moral man. Is the movie meant to suggest that religious morality is irrelevant as long as one is saving Jews? In any event, what about those who saved Jews and did so because they were driven by Christian values and morality?

IT IS IN NO WAY denigrating to Mr. Schindler, or to anyone else who risked his life to save Jews, to ask why one special book on this topic has been ignored by the Jewish community. Like many Jews of my generation, I grew up avidly reading libraries of works about the Holocaust. Imagine my surprise when, as an adult, I found a riveting, true story that I had not only never read but had never even heard of. As I began asking around, I learned that none of my Jewish friends or the thousands of Jews in my audiences had heard of this excellent book either.

Furthermore, a call to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, revealed that the book was not carried in their gift shop .

Was this an obscure and hidden volume? Not at all. The book is widely known and read in Christian homes and schools around the country. It has been made into a movie. The book is *The Hiding Place,* by Corrie ten Boom, which tells the true story of how she and her family hid Jews in the Netherlands. Both it and a follow-up book, *In My Father's House*, are well written and unbelievably heartrending.

Why then has it been ignored in the Jewish community? Why has it been in effect censored from Jewish reading lists on the Holocaust? Why was the movie version actually picketed by Jewish groups? I can only surmise that this reaction results from *The Hiding Place* not conforming to the stereotype of religious Christians to which the Jewish community has succumbed. Unlike Herr Schindler, who saved Jews for whatever reasons he personally felt, the ten Boom family's activities were directly motivated by their belief in Jesus. In her words: "Lord Jesus, I offer myself for Your people. In any way. Any place. Any time."

It is clear that Corrie ten Boom and her family desired to show all people, including Jews, what they fervently believed to be the truth of Christianity. Yet their saving of Jewish lives was not predicated on the Jews' accepting Christianity. In fact, the ten Boom family accorded great respect and effort to accommodate those Jews who wanted to keep kosher and observe the Sabbath while in hiding. Sadly, this Christian family's kindness was discovered; the Nazis hauled them away to their infamous prison camps where all but Corrie died. Fortunately, the Jews they had hidden escaped capture. Corrie's father, Mr. Caspar ten Boom, a revered Dutch citizen well into his eighties during the Holocaust, was told by the Nazis that they would release him if he would promise to stop his activities in sheltering Jews. His daughter recalls the scene:

> The Gestapo chief leaned forward. "I'd like to send you home, old fellow," he said. "I'll take your word that you won't cause any more trouble."
>
> I could not see Father's face, only the erect carriage of his shoulders and the halo of white hair above them. But I heard his answer.
>
> "If I go home today," he said evenly and clearly, "tomorrow I will open my door again to any man in need who knocks."

Shortly thereafter Caspar ten Boom died, isolated from his family in the Gestapo prison. This great man's philosophy is made clear earlier in the book. When he first tried to shelter a Jewish baby, a pastor tried to warn him of the danger. Mr. ten Boom replied, "You say we could lose our lives for this child. I would consider that the greatest honor that could come to my family." He repeated elsewhere that "In this household, God's people are always welcome."

Corrie herself spent years in concentration camps and lost her sister and nephew to the Nazis for their crimes of saving Jewish lives. Corrie ended her days recently in Southern California, unrecognized and unthanked by a Jewish community obsessed with *Schindler's List.* We owe her—and her fellow Christians—an apology.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin is president of Toward Tradition. His book America's Real War *has just been published.*

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THE ROOTS OF TODAY'S EPIDEMIC OF LYING IN HIGH PLACES

THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT VIRUS

By Lynne Cheney

People think that what goes on in college English departments doesn't matter much to the rest of our country. But in fact, English departments have been a primary source of the epidemic of lying currently upon us. In the late 1960s and early '70s, student radicals began moving into English departments, cultivating the idea that there is no truth—and therefore no possibility of untruth. As the radicals gained power and their views spread across the university and through society, lying came to be regarded not so much as a transgression that ought to produce guilt, but as an alternative "construction," a "narrative" with all the legitimacy that the unenlightened attribute to "truth."

The '60s radicals, to give them their due, became skeptics for good reason. The U.S. government had not been truthful about the defining event of their generation, the Vietnam War. Watching officials propagate versions of events designed to protect bureaucratic interests was a lesson in how information and power can be dangerously intertwined. From there, it no doubt seemed a small step to conclude that knowledge and power are always intertwined, that there is no objective truth but only—to quote Michel Foucault, one of the favorite philosophers of the '60s generation—different "regimes of truth."

It was, of course, an immense leap they were making, one that was too much for most philosophy departments, where demand for a certain rigor of thought meant that "postmodernism," as this new creed came to be called, was generally held in low regard. But in departments of English, history, sociology, and art history, postmodern thought was exalted, first at elite institutions like Yale and finally almost everywhere. So much intellectual excitement did the new thinking generate that even law schools wanted to partake. Duke English professor Stanley Fish, who attacked truth with all the fervor of an old-time preacher denouncing sin, was invited to teach at Duke's law school. At Harvard, a law professor auditing a class in the English department explained that lawyers increasingly understood that law was just like literature—a matter of interpretation.

By the 1980s, it was a rare student who went through college without encountering the view that there is no such thing as truth, that the things we think are true are just the "constructs" of dominant groups. Some professors, on the grounds that there is no truth, were unabashedly using the classroom to propagate their political agendas. Some students complained. Others joked, advising, for example, that men enrolled in women's studies courses should pretend at first to be male chauvinists, then have a conversion: "You're bound to get an *A*." But many students, fearing retaliation, went along. "I'm not here to philosophize my beliefs," one told me a few years ago, "I'm here to get a decent grade."

There has lately been a great outcry on college campuses about cheating, but when students feel compelled to represent someone else's *beliefs* as their own in order to get a good grade, should it surprise us that they have few qualms about representing someone else's *work* as their own? As they move out into the world, where truth-telling can be dull and disadvantageous, is it any wonder they construct personal versions of reality? Having heard time and again that there is no such thing as truth, why should they bother to tell it? Or to condemn others—the President, for example—who do not feel constrained by old-fashioned ideas about honesty?

Ironically, this English-department thinking, now flourishing in our culture, is no longer doing so well in English departments. The Duke English department, once the envy of postmodernists everywhere, has imploded in insult and recrim-

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ination, and members of its once-vaunted faculty are escaping for jobs at other institutions.

But in other academic venues, the situation is less hopeful. At colleges of education, for instance, professors faced with research findings they don't like (say, that phonics is an effective way to teach reading), are increasingly sounding like Michel Foucault. They talk about objective research being no more than a power ploy, "part of the 'games of truth' we practice," in the words of a researcher at the Appalachian Educational Laboratory. An Indiana University education professor writes that people who look for "empirical validation" (otherwise known as evidence) do so only out of self-interest, in hopes of imposing their "regime or politics of truth."

Postmodernism is now—thankfully—on its way out of English departments. But it is still in our universities, still running its destructive course.

Lynne Cheney, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and former head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is the author of Telling the Truth.

FROM EUPHEMISM TO BLOODY LIES

By David Lehman

In the eighteenth-century France of painters Fragonard and Watteau, a lady told her confessor that she had "esteem" for a certain courtier. "Et combien de fois a-t-il vous estimé?" ("And how many times has he 'esteemed' you?"), the priest responded.

Euphemisms aren't always as witty, but they all serve the same purpose: concealment, denial, obfuscation. When limited to the traditional areas—sex, the bathroom, and death—euphemisms are white lies, expedient illusions. When they overtake a discourse, they are dangerous—for the language itself and for human freedom.

We live in an age of euphemisms. In America it's O.K. to think bad thoughts or do bad deeds. But it is not O.K. to say them out loud or call them by their right name. You aren't lying, you're "telling your own personal truth." You're not promiscuous but "sexually expressive." You're not a plagiarist, you just practice "voice-merging."

Political correctness is the euphemism made instinctive. It is the systematic substitution of wish-fulfillment for reality. The U.S. Postal Service issues a commemorative stamp honoring the painter Jackson Pollock but airbrushes out the cigarette in the famous photo of him. The aim is to stamp out cigarettes, and perhaps it is a worthy aim, but the erasure not only bullies the populace but dishonors the truth, Pollock's truth, which is that he was not only a great painter but also a highly volatile, hard-drinking chain-smoker hell-bent on self-destruction.

The Postal Service wants to clean up Pollock's image. But that is not so desirable as it may appear. A citizen defending the erasure says the stamp properly focuses our attention on the painter's art rather than on his addictions. But isn't it possible—more than possible—that the two cannot be sundered so easily?

Many public lies are benign at the beginning. The sexless "flight attendant" is adopted, and "stewardess" retired, toward the elimination of sexual discrimination. But what is the actual effect of eliminating the sex of the subject? Does it not imply that the suffix, "ess," connotes inferiority and therefore expresses condescension? Whatever effect the change may have on sexual harassment or sexist attitudes, it has the definite effect of weakening the language by making it less specific, less vigorous, more verbose, and in the instance of "flight attendant" or "waitperson" more nearly neutered.

What accounts for today's universality of euphemism? T. S. Eliot understated the short answer in his "Four Quartets": "Human kind cannot bear very much reality." Our century is supposedly rife with disillusionment: the lost generation following World War I, the existential angst following the liberation of the death camps, the supposed cynicism of Gen Xers. In fact, however, the general appetite for illusion has grown to gargantuan limits. The movies are the definitive art of our time precisely because they are the most efficient means of bringing illusion and wish-fulfillment to the greatest number of people.

The longer answer explaining today's euphemism boom originates in some disturbing linguistic claims promoted over the last generation by certain academics in Europe and America. These claims can be summarized in the notion that we are not responsible for our words, because the language we speak is itself a factory of lies.

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DUKE ENGLISH PROFESSOR STANLEY FISH ATTACKED TRUTH WITH ALL THE FERVOR OF AN OLD-TIME PREACHER DENOUNCING SIN.

Modern linguistics is built on the principle that the means of communication are neither reliable nor politically neutral but that, on the contrary, language itself deceives. Because there is said to be a chasm between rhetoric and reality "deconstructionists" bend the text (never a poem or novel, always a "text") to their will. Each work examined is deconstructed to demonstrate the impossibility of creating a coherent statement, let alone a truthful one, out of words. Thus the shocking discovery that language can be used to lie, distort, conceal, and fabricate (and it is a shocking discovery at whatever age one makes it) grew into the suspicion that what sometimes happens (usually with a deliberate motive) must *always* happen, with a kind of inevitability independent of human will. Lying is claimed to be a universal practice. Of course, "everyone does it all the time" is all the defense any liar needs.

Deconstruction and the broader field of "critical theory" are said to have crested as forces within American universities. I am not altogether convinced. I believe the tools of deconstruction and its mood of radical suspicion are everywhere present in the study of the humanities. Deconstructionism's favorite technique of flipping the order of any two elements where one is held inferior to another may be interesting exercise when applied to opposing pairs like man/woman or white/black. But when the procedure is done with truth/falsehood and virtue/vice, the results can be calamitous. Many theorists, as the Alan Sokal physics hoax proved, are now even willing to throw out science and scientific method, as if, say, gravity were merely one more concept to be debunked.

I WONDER IF deconstructionism's denigration of the importance of authorship—especially Michel Foucault's insinuation that authorship and copyright law may be capitalist tools—made plagiarism more acceptable? I worry that academic Marxism's reduction of humanity to the social and economic forces acting upon it cannot help but diminish such virtues as honesty, integrity, and honor. I am concerned that today's dogma that the powerful rewrite history may devalue history itself into a sequence of episodes in which might makes right, and any means of attaining your goal—lies and deceit included—are justified.

The idea, so common in American college English departments today, that Marxism still has intellectual integrity seems to me one more instance of stubborn illusion, the triumph of the "theoretical" over the bloody truth. I asked a self-described Marxist how he managed to keep the faith despite the wretched history of the Soviet experiment. Oh, Russia didn't count, he answered, "they didn't really try it there." In this man's view, the Russian Revolution was not genuine Marxism, and therefore the Gulag, the show trials, and Stalinism were irrelevant. This refusal to surrender the abstraction in the face of the disastrously real is true sentimentality. It would be poignant if it weren't implicated in the general assault on truth that we now find in the highest offices of the land, as well as in the low.

The poet David Lehman wrote the signal critique of deconstructionism Signs of the Times: Deconstruction and the Fall of Paul de Man.

A LYING TONGUE LASTS ONLY A MOMENT

By Gene Edward Veith

Listening to President Clinton's explanation of how he didn't really lie in his grand jury testimony brought back fond memories of my grad school days. What Clinton did was take the words *sex, alone,* and *is* and proceed to "deconstruct" them. That is, he took ordinary terms whose meaning seems perfectly clear and dissected them so closely that they dissolved into contradictions, uncertainties, and conundrums. He was not lying because, in his rendering of the words, he was never alone with Miss Lewinsky (since other people were in the White House), and they never had sex (since he did not consider oral sex to be sex). If the Independent Counsel and the grand jury had other definitions in mind, these would simply be *their* reading of the words. In a *tour de force* that would have won him an *A* in any literary criticism seminar, the President presented meaning as inherently problematic, hinging completely on each individual's interpretation.

The President's performance was complemented by the "White House spokesmen," who also must have taken their share of English lit. seminars. According to contemporary critical theory, interpretation itself is a matter of constructing paradigms—also known as "plausibility structures" or "interpretive models"—to account for data. White House spinmasters proved adept at accounting for even the most incriminating evidence, by offering a succession of possible scenarios in which they depicted Miss Lewinsky at various times as a stalker, a tool of the right-wing conspiracy, and a troubled youth whom the President was counseling.

In the nation's colleges and universities, students are taught that truth is not discovered, but built. If there is no objective truth, of course, it is impossible to lie. Or, put another way, if there is no objective truth, *everything* is a lie.

Thinkers in pre-modern times believed in a vast array of truths—rational, empirical, moral, and theological. "Modern" thinkers restricted truth to what can be known through the scientific method. The "postmodernists" have taken the next step, rejecting even scientific certainty and dismantling the category of objective truth altogether.

Having allowed these redefinitions to take place, it should not be shocking to us to discover that some of our most

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"Everyone does it all the time" is all the defense any liar needs.

contemporary political leaders are fluent liars. Nor should we be surprised at the "promising young journalists" who get caught making up news stories, the TV producers who mix fact and fiction, the deceptive advertisers, the new profession of "spin doctors." These and other cadres of new liars are simply acting out what they were taught in school.

Postmodern relativism has become a commonplace not only in the academic world but on nearly every level of the culture. Grade-school children are being taught according to "constructivist" educational theory—which encourages them to construct their own histories, word-spellings, and math rules. Television takes seriously the literary critic's canard that, since truths are all constructions, there is no difference between the real and the fictive. And according to a recent survey, 66 percent of the American people believe "there is no absolute truth."

Moral categories such as "lying," "honesty," and "hypocrisy" come out of a far different worldview, as do legal categories such as "swearing under oath," "proof beyond a reasonable doubt," and "perjury." The foundation of Western civilization was formed by the classical Greeks and Romans and the biblical Jews and Christians, all of whom believed in transcendent truths and transcendent moral virtues.

By contrast, Jacques Derrida, a key philosopher of postmodernism, argues that because there is no "transcendent logos," there can be no objective meaning. *Logos*—Greek for "word," "speech," "reason"—is central to Greek philosophy and also to the New Testament's famous passage, "In the beginning was the *Word,* and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In other words, Derrida is claiming that, because there is no God and no Word of God, there is no ground for asserting a rational order in the universe or an objective meaning in language.

Postmodernism, by its own admission, is the logical consequence of the rejection of God. When we "turn our backs on God," says the Hebrew prophet Isaiah, we start "uttering lies our hearts have conceived" and soon discover that "truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey" (Isaiah 59:13-15).

Postmodernism cannot last long, for it is an intellectual, moral, and cultural dead end. Without truth there can be no education, no moral consensus, no laws or norms that are essential for culture. "Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment" says Proverbs 12:19.

On the other hand, those who do believe in a transcendent logos—namely, God and His Word—have a foundation for truth of every kind, and a reason to seek it. It is on those who believe there is such a thing as truth that the job of rebuilding our intellectual and cultural infrastructure will fall.

Gene Veith is an English professor at Concordia University-Wisconsin, culture editor of World, *and author of* Postmodern Times.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE STOP TEACHING TRUTH?

By Christina Hoff Sommers

In the fall of 1996, I took part in a PBS program billed as a "Socratic dialogue." For an hour, I discussed moral questions with another ethics professor, a high school history teacher, and seven high school students. The program, "Ethical Choices: Individual Voices," is now circulated to high schools for use in classroom discussions about right and wrong. Its message still troubles me.

In a typical exchange, the moderator posed this question to the students: Unexpectedly your teacher has assigned you a five-page paper. You have only a few days to do it, and you are already overwhelmed with work. Would it be wrong to hand in someone else's paper?

Two of the students found the suggestion unthinkable and spoke about responsibility, honor, and principle. "I wouldn't do it. It is a matter of integrity," said Elizabeth. "It's dishonest," said Erin. But several others saw nothing wrong with such cheating. Eleventh-grader Joseph flatly said, "If you have the opportunity, you should use it." Eric concurred, "I would use the paper and offer it to my friends."

Having taught moral philosophy to college freshmen for more than 15 years, I was not surprised to find students defending cheating. There are always a few in every class who play devil's advocate with an open admiration for the devil's position. I am also aware of ethics surveys indicating that large numbers of students have few qualms about stealing and cheating. The Josephson Institute's 1998 "Report Card on Ethics of American Youth" surveyed more than 10,000 high schools students. Thirty-five percent of students were willing to cheat on a test "if it would help them get into college"; 47 percent had stolen something from a store in the past year.

But at least here, in this PBS Socratic discussion, I expected to have a professional ally in the other philosophy teacher, professor William Puka of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Surely he would join me in making the case for being honest. Instead, Puka defected. He told the students that in this situation, the teacher was immoral for giving the students such a burdensome assignment. "What disturbs me is how accepting you all seem to be of this assignment. To me it's outrageous from the point of view of learning to force you to write a paper in this short a time."

Through most of the session professor Puka focused on the hypocrisy of parents, teachers, and corporations, but had little to say about the moral obligations of the students. He spoke disdainfully of "principled behavior" that ignores social or economic "context." When we discussed the morality of shoplifting, Puka pointed out that we must also consider such things as the "corporations' deciding on a 12 percent profit margin…and perhaps sweatshops." The professor was genially

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CLINTON TOOK THE WORDS SEX, ALONE, AND IS AND PROCEEDED TO "DECONSTRUCT" THEM.

advising high school students to question moral teachings and rules of behavior that are critical to their own well-being.

Unfortunately, Puka's philosophy of education and its unconcern for personal integrity has been the vogue in schools of education for several decades. It has gone under various names: values clarification, situation ethics, self-esteem building. These so-called "value-free" approaches to ethics have flourished at the same time that many parents are failing to give children basic guidance in right and wrong.

IN ADDITION TO BEING unimpressed with traditional truisms about honesty and personal responsibility, today's students are often egregiously clueless about religious and moral history. This was recently demonstrated in some "man-on-the street" interviews by "Tonight Show" host Jay Leno. One night he collared some young people to ask them questions on the Bible. "Can you name one of the Ten Commandments?" Mr. Leno asked two college-aged women. One ventured a reply: "Freedom of speech?" Mr. Leno, to another young woman: "Complete this sentence: 'Let he who is without sin....'" Her response, "...have a good time?" Mr. Leno turned to a young man and asked, "Who in the Bible was eaten by a whale?" To this, he received the confident answer, "Pinocchio."

Children who are morally illiterate, children who are not adequately warned about the hazards of lying, cheating, stealing, and cutting corners are harmed in very direct ways. Their characters are weakened. Their prospects for a successful life are diminished.

And small violations grow into large ones. In 1994, hoping to find out why some cops go wrong, the Chicago police looked back on the early records of corrupt officers. They noticed a striking pattern. In every case, there was from the very beginning a record of small infractions. Though none of the dishonesties and misbehaviors was sufficient to draw much attention, the Department concluded these recruits might have been salvageable had there been strict interventions from the beginning.

Just as this "failure of character" reflects on the laxness of the Chicago Police Department, so the moral drift of many of today's children reflects on the permissive ways of their parents and teachers. Many baby boomer parents and instructors are in the grip of romanticism. Anxious to encourage their children's freedom and creativity, they look the other way when confronted with small infractions of virtue, not realizing that in their failure to give a clear lesson in right and wrong they are withholding something essential to the child's well-being.

Two years ago I delivered a commencement address at a prep school in Princeton, New Jersey, that had banned a small group of senior boys from attending their own graduation for violating school rules. One furious mother took her son's side and verbally attacked the headmaster, threatening to create a scene at the graduation if her son was excluded. The headmaster stuck to his guns, but the lesson the mother imparted to her son in the process was ruinous.

IN THE EARLY '90S many parents began encouraging schools to enforce standards of moral behavior that had fallen into disuse, and we now see character education programs slowly finding their ways back into the curriculum. But, you may depend on it, the move back to older standards will continue to be resisted by many educators.

Amherst professor Benjamin DeMott wrote a scathing article for *Harper's Magazine* a few years ago jeering at the new character education movement. How you can teach ethics in a society where "in the space of three years, the total compensation of the average CEO...rises from 40 times to 93 times that of the average factory worker?" he asked. Journalist Alfie Kohn wrote a long and critical piece in the education magazine *Phi Delta Kappan* accusing those who promote moral education of seeking to indoctrinate children into being obedient workers in an unjust society. Kohn complained that "children in America are even expected to begin each day by reciting a loyalty oath to the Fatherland, although we call it by a different name." Putting our Pledge of Allegiance on the same plane with Nazi slogans is a fair example of the reaction of many educators to any attempt to teach traditional ethics today.

What do the DeMotts, the Kohns, and the Pukas think of students like Eric and Joseph, the 16-year-old boys who defended lying in our PBS dialogue? What do these fashionably progressive mentors make of all the kids who cheated in school? Do they recognize their moral offspring?

DESPITE SEVERAL DECADES of laissez-faire morality and bad philosophy entering classrooms from schools of education into classrooms, most kids still turn out all right. Even in the Josephson Institute survey, 64 percent of American youngsters said they would *not* be willing to cheat to get into college. The reservoir of decency in American children is far from exhausted, but they need guidance, direction, and training. They need to be introduced to their cultural and moral heritage. They need to be taught that truth and honesty are cardinal values.

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LYING'S THREAT TO THE LEFT

By Joel Kotkin

For much of his career, Bob Fitch has been the prototypical man of the Left. Labor organizer, activist, Marxist intellectual, he draws from a long tradition of American radicalism that combines complex theory with an in-the-streets commitment.

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ANXIOUS TO ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILDREN'S FREEDOM & CREATIVITY, BABY BOOMERS LOOK THE OTHER WAY WHEN CONFRONTED WITH SMALL INFRACTIONS OF VIRTUE.

Yet in recent years this professor of urban economics at New York University has witnessed the rise of a threat to his cherished ideals, a danger he finds more alarming than opposition by conservatives, corporate executives, or corrupt union officials: The rise of "postmodernism." With its basic contempt for science, facts, and even reason, Fitch says, postmodernism strikes at the very heart of traditional leftism, namely, the fundamental Enlightenment belief in rationalism.

Radical activists increasingly rely on "junk science," such as the Alar pesticide scare, to rouse their troops. Left-wing academics and intellectuals featured in magazines like *The Nation* have rallied behind truth-breakers like Mike Davis and Rigoberta Menchu even after their writing has been revealed to be fraudulent. With so many leftists not caring whether or not something is true, observes the curly-haired New Yorker, why should anyone believe anything they say?

Davis, for instance, has filled his books with untruths that would shame the author of a junior high school term paper. His transgressions go far beyond research errors. He even took a section from a novel called *Pomona Queen* and inserted it, as fact, in his book *Ecology of Fear* in order to bolster his theory about dying downtowns.

The really damaging discovery is that Davis and his defenders don't *care* about his pattern of misrepresentations and lies. Even one of his most cloying defenders, environmental activist Lewis MacAdams, writes in the *L.A. Weekly* that Davis "is the first to admit that he won't let a fact get in the way.... 'I was stunned,' I've heard him say twice lately, 'to find out something I said turned out to be true.'"

Menchu is even more outrageous in her manipulations of reality, claiming to have had a brother who was burned alive by the military as her family watched, when it is now known this never happened. She also painted herself as an illiterate pauper when in fact she was sent to Catholic schools by her landowning family. The central portions of her account turned out to be a fraud re-arranged to suit the needs of the revolutionary organization she had joined.

Though Menchu was exposed by a traditional leftist (David Stoll), and Davis debunked mostly by non-conservative writers like Denise Hamilton, Greg Critser, D. J. Waldie, and Veronique de Turenne writing in generally left-of-center magazines, nonetheless many left-wing defenders of postmodernism have struck back at the truth-tellers. Menchu called Stoll a racist, and *Nation* columnist Alexander Cockburn blasted him for demolishing an important icon of radicalism. Davis's admirers have likewise attacked his critics as either hired mercenaries of the business elite or intellectual midgets fixated on piddling questions of fact and historical accuracy.

To Fitch, these apologias for untruth are a slap in the face to the radical tradition. Marx's nineteenth-century scientism may be outdated, he admits, but its use of facts and rational analysis provided penetrating alternative views of the world. "There's a sense" among the postmodernists "that objective conditions don't matter at all," notes Fitch. They "don't believe in facts." This divorce from reason, Fitch suggests, stems from the fact that postmodernism springs out of nihilistic, narcissistic thinking by philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Friedrich Nietzsche (philosophies that also inspired the development of fascist and national socialist thought).

With its emphasis on the power of the intellectual superman who creates his own reality, postmodernism is instinctively hostile to the masses that traditional leftism sought to liberate, Fitch argues. Rejecting the past, religion, the family, and the individuality of common people, postmodern philosophy is by nature unsympathetic to the surrounding community. Like its hero, French philosopher Michel Foucault (who infected scores of other men with AIDS before dying of it himself), postmodernism is utterly self-absorbed, without moral grounding, and leads to a nihilistic cul-de-sac.

Given the impractical and often impenetrable nature of postmodernist thinking, it may be easy to write it off as an academic irrelevance. But as New York University psychologist Paul Vitz notes, postmodernism is dangerous despite its uselessness, for it has undermined the whole process of evidence-collecting, intellectual case-building, and rational discourse. After rooting on campuses, its extreme relativism and disdain for hard truths have trickled down into many other places—the Clinton administration, local schools, even corporations—where unwanted realities are denied, speech is circumscribed, and those who fail to live up to politically correct standards are prosecuted.

Ultimately, the biggest threat is not to postmodernism's conservative enemies, or to capitalism, or to mainstream politics, but rather to leftism itself. Postmodernism's emphasis on words rather than deeds, on "narrative" rather than fact, brings an unhealthy fixation on cultural issues such as feminism, racism, and sexual orientation, Fitch complains. As a result, leftists are being detached from the issues that matter most to real people, notably economics.

The postmodern ethic may also have the effect of weakening the activist impulse itself. Goetz Wolff, research director of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, accuses writers such as Davis of providing little in the way of constructive advice. Their views are often so bleak they have a chilling effect on readers. Postmodernism is a call to inaction, says Wolff, leaving no truths, no hope, and thus no projects.

By embracing lying and deception, the Left is now endangering its ability to engage the American people. And that, in the long run, will do the most harm to the Left itself.

TAE *contributing writer Joel Kotkin is a fellow of the Pepperdine Institute for Public Policy and the Reason Foundation.*

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THIS SUMMER MARKS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF GERALD FORD'S RISE TO THE PRESIDENCY FOLLOWING RICHARD NIXON'S RESIGNATION. HE WAS THE...

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Right Man for the Hour

On August 9, 1974, Gerald Rudolph Ford of Grand Rapids, Michigan, became President of the United States after Richard Nixon resigned in disgrace. A steady, competent man whose integrity was unchallenged, Ford brought an element of Midwestern grace to an office that had been tarnished by lies and unethical behavior.

Born Leslie King—as a tot he was renamed after his new stepfather—Ford played center for the University of Michigan football team, attended Yale Law School, did some modeling on the side, and served as a lieutenant on an aircraft carrier in the South Pacific during World War II. Returning to Grand Rapids, he was elected to Congress in 1948. He served almost a quarter-century in the House of Representatives, rising to Minority Leader, before Nixon appointed him Vice President following the resignation of Spiro Agnew.

Upon being sworn in as President, Ford announced, "our long national nightmare is over." He was exceptionally popular at first: His genial manner and laid-back family were a welcome contrast to the secretive and uptight Nixon White House. His honeymoon with press and public ended after just one month in office, however, when he pardoned former President Nixon.

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Faced with a hostile Congress brimming with the "Watergate babies" of 1974, Ford used his veto pen an astounding 66 times. As if raging inflation, a deepening recession, and the lingering smell of the Nixon administration weren't enough, President Ford survived two assassination attempts in 1975. His occasional stumbles provided material for TV comedians, though few, if any, Presidents have been as athletic as Ford—who turned down professional football contracts from both the Detroit Lions and the Green Bay Packers in favor of law school.

Former California Governor Ronald Reagan contested with Ford for the 1976 GOP nomination. An increasingly surefooted Ford defeated Reagan and then ran neck and neck—despite the pendant Nixon albatross—with Jimmy Carter in the general election. He lost, narrowly and graciously, and retired to California. (In an odd twist of fate, Gerald Ford was considered as Reagan's running mate in 1980, though the deal fell through.)

Presidential reputations rise and fall: witness Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy. Perhaps, in this new age of presidential mendacity, it is time to revise the reputation of Gerald R. Ford. From a distance of 25 years, his virtues seem worthier by the day.

—the editors

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Nixon and Ford

GENTLE IN MANNER, STRONG IN DEED

By George Bush

The President of the United States is America's moral, not just political, leader. Presidents must do right to achieve good.

Gerald Ford knew that, and decency was his core. I can think of no one who a quarter-century ago could have done a better job. He believed that honesty was government's polar star. It lit his view that "Here the people rule," "Ours is a country of laws, not men," and "Honesty is the best policy." I have never heard one story of Ford telling another person an untruth. And amid the nightmare of Watergate that was most welcome.

Jerry Ford was not a household name when he assumed the presidency. He'd been a Congressman for 25 years, and Vice President less than a year. But the more America saw of him, the more it liked.

I knew him for many years before he led this nation. He was his own man, with great self-confidence, and could work with people on both sides of the aisle. Ford meant what he said and said what he meant. Today, when politics is coarse and ugly, we should remember him as a man who had opponents but never enemies.

As August 1974 began, I was chairman of the Republican National Committee. It was a traumatic, almost unreal time. I remember a Cabinet meeting the final week of Richard Nixon's presidency. Nixon came into the room and started talking about the economy. We wanted to talk about the Watergate scandal, but he wouldn't. Until near the end, he was in denial.

Nixon often talked down to people. In Cabinet meetings, he would criticize "Ivy League bastards." We'd roll our eyes but forgive Nixon because he worked so hard, knew what he wanted to achieve, and had a superb foreign policy. I liked him. I wanted him to succeed.

That's why it was so tragic that Nixon lied about Watergate, and paid the price. I felt broken-hearted for the man. That last week of his presidency, I went to see the then-Vice President. Ford knew that he would shortly be President. He was calm, not arrogant, and believed he could do the job. I remember the change in mood in Washington when he became President. It was instant, overnight.

As President, Ford faced a nation obsessed with Watergate. His reply was the "full, free, and absolute" September 8, 1974 pardon for all federal crimes Nixon "committed or may have committed or taken part in" from 1969-74. Ford knew that the pardon would be controversial, and he took a lot of piling on. I thought it was right then, and I think history now agrees. He was willing to do the courageous thing—even though it probably cost him the presidency against Jimmy Carter.

On January 15, 1975, Ford said, "The State of the Union is not good." It was dramatically better by the time he left office. In particular, he helped the economy by slowing spending and taxes and vetoing scores of bills.

Ford was a unifier, not a divider. Liberals dubbed Ford rightist. Conservatives thought him insufficiently partisan. He didn't care. He intended to govern as President of all the people.

His forte was honor, not rhetoric, showing how civility could light even the dark cave of politics. I often compare Gerald Ford to Dwight Eisenhower, more President than politician.

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He would have liked the plaque that topped Ike's desk: "Gentle in manner, strong in deed."

George Bush was America's forty-first President.

NORMALCY COMES TO BEDLAM

By Aram Bakshian, Jr.

The first thing I noticed about the Ford takeover of the White House was the pipes.

Jerry Ford was a pipe smoker. So, Washington being Washington—and people being sheep—as soon as he assumed the presidency one noticed an increasing number of nervous staff holdovers in the corridors of the White House and the Old Executive Office Building puffing away on newly bought pipes. Not that it did much good; within days, many of the upper and upper-middle tier Nixon staffers were gone, or on their way out.

There were, however, a few comic exceptions. One of Jerry Ford's first actions on becoming President was to appoint a new press secretary, his old friend and veteran Michigan reporter Jerry TerHorst. And one of Jerry TerHorst's first actions as White House Press Secretary was to announce that John McLaughlin—of later "McLaughlin Group" TV fame—was no longer a member of the White House speechwriting staff. Father John (he was still a Jesuit priest at the time) trusted in the Lord, ignored the announcement, and hunkered down in his office. Before TerHorst could cut off McLaughlin's electricity and running water, God or history intervened. TerHorst himself abruptly resigned as press secretary to protest President Ford's pardon of Nixon while John McLaughlin lingered on for weeks. Not everyone shared John's survival skills. David Gergen, the able head of White House speechwriting, learned that his departure had been announced at a press briefing while he was having lunch with his staff at Trader Vic's. No one had had the courtesy to let him know in advance. Unfazed, Gergen became right-hand man to Treasury Secretary Bill Simon and—the last laugh always being the heartiest—was called back to the Ford White House in its last months to restore some semblance of order in the communications operation.

PRESIDENT FORD INHERITED A SICK, INFLATIONARY ECONOMY, AN ENERGY CRISIS, THE STILL UNRESOLVED MESS IN VIETNAM, A POLARIZED POPULATION, A HOSTILE MEDIA, AND A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN BOTH HOUSES OF THE CONGRESS THAT SMELLED BLOOD AND WAS TAKING NO PRISONERS.

I was one of the few to be spared in this massacre of the semi-innocents. A member of the presidential speechwriting staff since 1972, I had helped draft a few speeches for Jerry Ford when he came aboard as Vice President following the resignation of Spiro Agnew. Ford and his senior staffers seem to have liked my work; at any rate, I was the only member of the Nixon speechwriting team who was invited to stay on indefinitely. For me, "indefinitely" proved to be until autumn 1975 when, as a self-taught college drop-out, I couldn't resist the irony of accepting a proffered resident fellowship at Harvard's Institute of Politics. After more than three years at the White House, I left without regrets—either for my time spent there, or for my decision to leave.

As an occasional writer of history and biography, I had particularly enjoyed studying what has to have been the most unusual transfer of presidential power in the history of our republic. If ever a man was dealt a weak hand on his way into the presidency, it was Gerald Ford. He had become unelected Vice President when Agnew resigned in disgrace. Once there, he felt honor bound to do everything he could to defend the beleaguered Nixon presidency while still maintaining his own well-deserved reputation for integrity. He had barely settled in as Veep when he had to assume the presidency itself after another resignation-in-disgrace.

President Ford inherited a sick, inflationary economy, an energy crisis, the still unresolved mess in Vietnam, a polarized population, a hostile media, and a Democratic majority in both houses of the Congress that smelled blood and was taking no prisoners.

On top of all that, Jerry Ford was the first President in our history to take office without any transition time. Every other President has been tempered by the Darwinian political process of, if not primaries, caucuses, and conventions, at least national elections in which they have run for either the presidency or vice presidency. Thus, by the time they reached the White House they already had battle-tested staffs. Experience and attrition had already stripped away many cronies and incompetents. Jerry Ford had no shake-down cruise. He had to start cold. It is a tribute to his personal character and judgment that, with all the cards stacked against him, he did as well as he did. There was something so obviously solid, honest, and manly about him that even those who were his political foes could not ignore it.

Not all of history's indispensable men and women are star turns. Some of them simply prove to be the right person in the right place at a dangerous time. They may never make it to Mount Rushmore, but they help preserve the principles and the heritage of those who did. President Ford was such a man. Sitting with him in the Oval Office, going over a speech draft or discussing an upcoming event, you instinctively knew that you were in the company of a man who understood his job, was staunch in his beliefs, and was determined to do what was right for the country—not what the latest opinion poll told him was politically advantageous to himself. He was the ultimate good steward at a time when one was sorely needed.

It is only just that this modest, selfless elder statesman has lived to see his fellow

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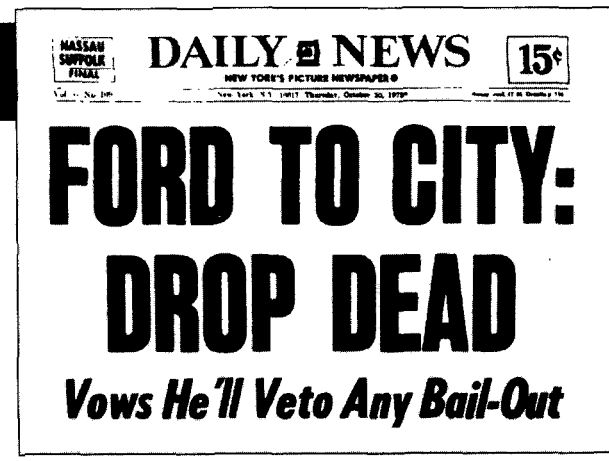
FORD TO CITY: GROW UP



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Conventional wisdom has it that by pardoning Richard Nixon, President Ford sacrificed his re-election. A different act of presidential bravery, however, may have been even more consequential, both for the nation and for his political viability: namely, his refusal to bail out New York City. That inspired the notorious newspaper headline, "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD." Writing in the *Almanac of American Politics* at the time, Michael Barone judged that "Ford's posture probably cost him New York's 41 electoral votes—and the election."

Today, Barone still thinks that judgment is right, and he adds that if Ford had given in to the city's demands, "all the other big cities would have gone that route," busting their budgets, defaulting on their bonds, and then relying on the federal government to bail them out. "The dream of 1965-75—that there was unlimited money and big cities had unlimited claims on the resources of the rest of the country—was stopped. Ford forced people to wake up from the dream."

The drama began in early 1975, when lenders refused to buy any more of New York City's bonds. It was becoming clear that the city's spiraling budget deficits, and the borrowing needed to cover them, were spinning out of control.

In May, city officials asked Ford to make good their debt with federal monies. They were politely but firmly rebuffed. In his letter to New York Mayor Abe Beame, the President wrote:

> I was deeply impressed with the problems you and the City Council must face in the next few weeks in meeting the financial problems of the great City of New York.... However, it was also clear that the City's basic critical financial condition is not new but has been a long time in the making without being squarely faced.

A federal bailout "would merely postpone...coming to grips with the problem," the President concluded, adding:

> Every family which makes up a budget has to make painful choices. As we make these choices at home, so must we also make them in public office too. We must stop promising more and more services without knowing how we will cover their costs.... In view of the foregoing...I must deny your request.

New York had an unrivalled proportion of its population on the public payroll, and it paid them lavishly. *Congressional Quarterly* documented that New York's per capita expenditures in 1972-73 were far higher than any other major city—over four and a half times Chicago's level, for instance. New York was paying its sanitation employees 50 percent more than Boston's, double Newark's, and four times New Orleans'.

Ford's Treasury Secretary William Simon, who wrote the definitive history of this affair in his memoir *A Time for Truth*, explained that New York pols thought they had found "the political formula for permanent wealth: promise-borrow-spend, promise-borrow-spend." The city's "unpleasant little secret" was its "subsidies to the middle classes" (especially its municipal unions), which were "overwhelmingly greater than its subsidies to the poor." When this scheme collapsed, New York politicians "howled with self-pity," noted Simon.

Ford was pummeled by Democrats and the heavily New York-based media. New York Governor Carey accused the President of "kicking New York in the groin." He warned of riots and demanded "federal funds or federal troops!" New York socialist Irving Howe fumed that Gerald Ford had launched an "assault on maintaining, let alone extending, the welfare state." Ford's response: Any bailout bill will be vetoed.

This finally forced New York to take drastic steps. City unions made serious concessions, government expenditures were cut, taxes were raised, and a plausible plan to bring the city's budget into balance within two years was implemented. Applauding the way "New York has bailed itself out," Ford agreed to support temporary federal loans, with stringent conditions and above-market interest rates, which helped the city meet its seasonal cash needs until its budget reached balance.

"If we had shown any give," Ford later explained, New York would have dodged "the hard decisions" necessary. And he warned the country that "other cities, other states, as well as the federal government, are not immune to the insidious disease from which New York City is suffering." It is "a progressive disease" that can bring "a day of reckoning" to any locale where government becomes grandiose.

While it badly hurt his political standing in New York, Ford's demands for "fiscal responsibility" turned out to be popular with the rest of the country. Concern about profligacy in government began to gel nationally in the wake of the crisis, a backlash that bore political fruit a few years later. By holding firm even at the cost of losing re-election, President Ford thus set the stage for Ronald Reagan, Rudy Giuliani, and whatever hope America has for limited government in the future.

—*SW*

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countrymen recognize his qualities as a leader and as a man. Not that he didn't have a little help from his successor. In December 1976, I happened to spend a few weeks at San Clemente, California, one of many writers and former staffers asked to contribute some editing suggestions to the memoirs Richard Nixon was writing in those lonely, early days of exile. In one long, rambling conversation Nixon asked me what I thought history would make of Jerry Ford.

"Just give Jimmy Carter a year or two," I replied, "and Jerry Ford will look pretty damned good."

He looks even better today. No President ever faced more challenges with fewer resources; none shouldered the burden more bravely, calmly, and uncomplainingly. The homely virtues that Gerald Ford brought to the White House never glittered. But, over the years, they have acquired a noble patina that will never fade.

Aram Bakshian, Jr., has served as an aide to three Presidents, most recently as director of speechwriting for Ronald Reagan.

"I NEVER ENCOUNTERED A HIDDEN AGENDA"

By Henry Kissinger

After the so-called smoking-gun tape was released on August 5, Vice President Gerald Ford, at a Cabinet meeting the next day, took the unprecedented step of dissociating from President Nixon. He would no longer defend the President's position on Watergate, he said, and, indeed, he would not have done so in the past had he known what was on the tape. Publicly he would maintain silence on the matter on the ground that he was a "party in interest"—pointedly reminding everyone that he was next in line for Nixon's office. But Ford stressed that even though he was dissociating from the President, he would continue to support Nixon's policies.

In the week of Nixon's resignation soon after, I had no time to speculate on how it would affect my own position. Before I could address the subject, Ford took the decision out of my hands by telephoning me on the morning of August 8, after Nixon had informed him of his departure. Ford asked me to come to see him and, in his unassuming way, left the time up to me. In the course of the same conversation he asked me to stay on, and in a way that made it sound as if I would be doing him a favor by agreeing.

FORD WAS IMMUNE TO THE MODERN POLITICIAN'S CHAMELEON-LIKE SEARCH FOR EVER-NEW IDENTITIES, AND TO THE EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER THIS SEARCH CREATES.

Dramatic events are not always ushered in by dramatic dialogue. As I recall this conversation from the perspective of two decades, I am struck by its matter-of-fact tone and concerns. At the time, I was affected by the understated way in which Ford conveyed Nixon's decision, which would make him President, without rhetorical flourishes and without mentioning the emotional impact on himself. And I was moved by his tact in so swiftly putting an end to any personal uncertainty I might be experiencing.

The atmosphere of the conversation carried over into our meeting that afternoon. I sat on a sofa near the balcony overlooking the White House lawn, Ford in an easy chair with his back to the window. He seemed casual and calm, neither grandiloquent nor pretentiously humble. He opened the conversation by saying he intended to announce even before he had taken the oath of office—in fact, that very evening—that I would be staying. Artlessly, he added that he felt confident we would "get along." I replied that it was my job to get along with him, not the other way around.

Perhaps the most lasting impression of that first conversation was its aftermath. For the first time since I came to the White House, I left the presidential presence without afterthoughts, confident that there was no more to the conversation than what I had heard. Starting with that first meeting, I never encountered a hidden agenda. He was sufficiently self-assured to disagree openly, and he did not engage in elaborate maneuvers about who should receive credit. Having been propelled so unexpectedly into an office he revered but never thought he would hold, he felt no need to manipulate his environment. Ford's inner peace was precisely what the nation needed for healing its divisions.

Gerald Ford was an uncomplicated man tapped by destiny for some of the most complicated tasks in the nation's history. He was called, after the Vietnam War and Watergate, to heal the most severe national divisions since the Civil War. As different as possible from the driven personalities who typically propel themselves into the highest office, Gerald Ford restored calm and confidence to a nation surfeited with upheavals, overcame a series of international crises, and ushered in a period of renewal for American society.

Gerald Ford performed his task of overcoming America's divisions and redeeming its faith so undramatically and with such absence of histrionics that his achievements have so far been taken too much for granted. To a great extent, this neglect was because Ford bore so little resemblance to the prototype of the political leader of the Television Age. The media and many of his colleagues were at a loss when it came to fitting him into the familiar stereotypes.

The curious paradox of contemporary democracy is that while political leaders have never been more abject in trying to determine the public's preferences, respect for the political class has never been lower. Gerald Ford, though, was about as different as possible from the familiar political persona. He was immune to the modern politician's chameleon-like search for ever-new identities, and to the emotional roller coaster this search creates.

Cartoonists had great fun with Ford's occasionally fractured syntax. They forgot

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—if they were ever aware—that being articulate is not the same as having analytical skill, which Ford had in abundance. For a national leader, courage and devotion to principle are, in any case, the more important qualities.

Ford was well aware of his relative lack of suavity and, unlike the modern political leader, was not embarrassed to admit it. "I am not one of those oratorical geniuses," he said to me on the telephone on January 15, 1975. "There is no point in my trying to be one. I just have to be myself."

Ford reacted to the seemingly inexhaustible volume of challenges without either self-pity or doubt about the good faith of his political adversaries. Ford viewed his role not unlike that of a doctor ministering to a patient just recovering from a debilitating illness. He therefore resisted demands for heroic posturing and prescribed a regimen of building and conserving strength. Ford thought it essential to prove to the American people that crisis and confrontation were a last resort, not an everyday means of conducting policy.

Ford displayed personal goodwill to friend and foe alike. At times, I thought his apparent equanimity excessive, especially when his reluctance to impose penalties made resistance to presidential authority appear free of risk. In retrospect, I have come to appreciate Ford's self-restraint, for it gradually drained the American political system of its accumulated poison and created the conditions for the restoration of faith in American institutions.

This unflinching sense of the national interest enabled Ford in his 29 months in office to navigate his country through a series of crises that could have filled a two-term presidency. Other Presidents were to receive the credit for winning the Cold War. But I am certain the time will come when it is recognized that the Cold War could not have been won had not Gerald Ford, at a tragic point of America's history, been there to keep us from losing it.

Henry Kissinger served as Gerald Ford's Secretary of State. These remarks are adapted from his just-published memoir Years of Renewal.

THE "ANTI-CLINTON"

By James K. Glassman

As President Clinton gave his testimony in the Lewinsky scandal, I was thinking about Gerald Ford. Like Bill Clinton, he is a graduate of Yale Law School, but the similarity ends there.

Ford came to mind because I had heard him speak twice in recent months. A remarkable man, he can still hold his own with the intelligentsia from the think tanks. Having turned 85 last July, he looks 20 years younger, with clear blue eyes and the stature of the football star he once was. At one of those talks, he made a broad tour of the horizon, discussing the economy, the performance of Congress and—a subject to which he warmed—the coming election.

Ford is an optimist. He has the proper degree of wonder as he looks at the world: the fall of the Berlin Wall, the budget surplus, the spread of prosperity. He laments the passing of a more congenial politics, but he will not criticize the perpetrators of today's more contentious process. Despite what must have been a difficult life, with his wife's addiction and breast cancer, he seems a happy man, but most of all, a real adult—in striking contrast to the current occupant of the White House.

I also believe that Ford was a great hero. His pardon of Richard Nixon was a necessary and courageous act. It spared the nation a terrible ordeal—the trial of an ex-President—but it cost Ford the 1976 election, an outcome he certainly could have predicted.

He did the right thing and took the consequences. Again, can one say that about Bill Clinton?

Larry King recently asked Ford to comment on the Clinton scandals. "There's no question," Ford said, "the White House...has been undercut and damaged.... It's sad because the White House, historically, is looked upon as the epitome of integrity and leadership." Indeed, in an age in which military threats have diminished and the economy rolls ahead (under Fed chairman Alan Greenspan, who was Ford's top economic advisor), the most important function of the President is to serve as the symbol of national honor and strength and decency.

Corbis/Bettman

Tony Orlando and Betty Ford dance the bump.

In that function, Clinton has clearly failed.

The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans issued a report not long ago based on a survey of young people aged 14 to 18. When asked "which category their role model would be from," less than 1 percent of all teens now pick a political leader (and that 1 percent is split between foreign and American leaders).

Is it really surprising that no more than one teenager in 200 saw Clinton as a role model? I only wish more young Americans could see what a plain but dignified leader looks like, talks like, and acts like. Like Gerald Ford.

James Glassman is the Reader's Digest-DeWitt Wallace Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. A different version of this article was published in Intellectualcapital.com.

A DISSENTING VIEW

By Joseph Sobran

To conservatives, as a rule, Presidents look better in retrospect. Another way to put this is that every President tends to

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Alan Greenspan

In 1975, when the bottom appeared to be falling out of the economy, President Ford summoned me to the Oval Office. He wanted to know if I thought the economy would stabilize reasonably soon or if drastic action would be required as others had counseled. Instinctively, he was disinclined to take large government action.

I told him I believed still fragmentary evidence indicated that the nation was suffering from an inventory recession that should soon stabilize, and likely reverse its downward spiral. Ford accepted my critique and resolved not to support any of the numerous corrective initiatives (some of them ludicrous) that had been submitted for his review.

It was easy for me to recommend this course of action since he asked a factual question and requested an informed response. I simply presented the evidence. For the President making the final decision it was harder. But Ford never vacillated, despite severe criticism. Ultimately the economy came back sharply.

Jerry Ford made acting on policy look easy. Steadfast consistency was his hallmark. He kept his word. He never wavered.

—Alan Greenspan, currently head of the Federal Reserve, was chairman of President Ford's Council of Economic Advisors.

make his predecessors look better than they did while they held office. Many conservatives now revere Harry Truman, of whom they (like most Americans) held a low opinion while he was in the White House. More recently, they have softened on George Bush and even Jimmy Carter. Some of them even praise Franklin Roosevelt, their ancestral enemy.

They also look back fondly on Dwight Eisenhower, though they much preferred Robert Taft in 1952 and "Ike" was the choice of then-powerful Northeast liberal Republicans. William Buckley predicted that if Eisenhower got the 1952 GOP nomination, he would not only win the White House but consolidate the New Deal, making its social programs virtually impossible to repeal thereafter. This turned out to be all too true. And in the same way, Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford consolidated Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Republicans now talk of "saving" Social Security (FDR's brainchild) and Medicare (Johnson's progeny), the two greatest triumphs of what they used to call "creeping socialism."

A couple of years ago, adapting Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's famous phrase, I observed that Bill Clinton had "defined presidential deviancy down." Others have picked up this expression since then. But though Clinton has deviated more spectacularly than any previous chief executive he has effected no structural changes of the magnitude of the New Deal and the Great Society; his bad character hasn't been translated into any permanent institution. He has merely proven successful in seducing women and Republicans.

We shouldn't be misled by the trick of perspective that makes earlier Presidents look comparatively good. Often the harsh judgments of their contemporaries are correct. Conservatives deemed Gerald Ford an ineffectual President during his brief tenure. And so I believe he was.

As House Minority Leader and President, Ford offered little resistance to the agenda of the free-spending liberal Democrats who controlled Congress because he had no principled objections to that agenda. Like Robert Dole and George Bush, he was temperamentally opposed to most of the liberal agenda, but only until it was enacted. After it passed, he accepted it as a given. He lacked both the will and the imagination to try to repeal it because he lacked a philosophy by which to criticize it.

FORD WAS ALARMED BY PRINCIPLED CONSERVATIVES AND DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THEM.

Gerald Ford was actually alarmed by principled conservatives. He didn't understand them, much less sympathize with them. In 1980 he warned that Ronald Reagan couldn't win the presidency because his views were too extreme. Even now Reagan's victory has taught him nothing, and he regards the Republicans' conservative wing—especially the anti-abortion elements—as an alien force that will bring the party to defeat.

President Ford has never recognized that the United States, since the New Deal, has undergone a second revolution, in which a Constitution that was meant to establish a limited, federal government, confined to a few specified powers, has been perverted into an instrument of limitless, centralized government. The great practical mission of conservatives is to restore the Constitution. Non-conservative Republicans too often make constant incremental surrenders to the Leviathan state as it usurps countless powers never delegated through the Constitution.

There can be no more strategic mistake than to allow liberals to write the rules of this game. Conservatives only began to correct it during the Reagan years, when Reagan nominated Antonin Scalia and Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. But to this day there has been no real follow-up, let alone a Republican "revolution" to repeal the Roosevelt Revolution. In that crucial respect, the Republican Party remains much more the party of Gerald Ford than of Ronald Reagan.

Joseph Sobran is a nationally syndicated columnist.

Squeaky Fromme

Archive Photos

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Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Question: You worked in the administrations of four Presidents. Does one of them stand out?

Moynihan: Well, the one you had to love was Gerald Ford. He's just such a good man. And talk about how life isn't fair! Remember when he was running for reelection and he kept seemingly bumping his head on airplanes? I mean, here's a man who's a genuine athlete. It looked like he stumbled around. He didn't stumble at all.

—Senator Moynihan served as U.N. ambassador under President Ford. This exchange is drawn from a 1998 interview by Richard Meryman.

GOOD INSTINCT

By Donald Rumsfeld

Presidents in our country lead by consent and persuasion, rooted in trust, not by command. Fortunately, President Ford brought with him some extraordinarily valuable attributes: an instinctive honesty, straightforwardness, and openness. His character did much to restore confidence in government during that terribly difficult period in our country's history.

He made many good decisions on the big issues. For instance, the President made a clear commitment that a long decline in defense spending had to be reversed, and that we needed to maintain the deterrent power necessary for the U.S. to be able to contribute to peace and stability in the world. It was not a popular position, but he worked hard on this problem and won.

At his inauguration, President Carter turned to the departing President Ford and said simply, "For myself and our country, I want to thank my predecessor for all he has done to heal our land." Gerald Ford accomplished these things, in large measure, because of the kind of human being he is.

Donald Rumsfeld was Secretary of Defense in the Ford administration.

DANGERS VETOED

By Carla Hills

For 29 months, Gerald Ford successfully led our country, beset by a weakened economy, through its most serious constitutional crisis. Political turmoil at home and the oil crisis engendered in the Middle East had the nation reeling. Labor costs were rising, federal revenues were falling, inflation hit double digits, interest rates soared, and unemployment was climbing.

Candid, open, and direct, President Ford made the tough decisions. He brought strong-willed individuals into his administration and demonstrated his willingness to expose his ideas to independent thinking. I have vivid memories of his ability to debate issues openly and reach expeditious decisions. And his decisions were always guided by principles—not polls.

He knew that inflation could destroy the American dream for average working Americans. He was convinced that excessive federal spending was making their circumstances worse. In his first State of the Union address, he told Congress that he would veto bills promoting excessive spending, and this he did over and over. Remarkably, 54 of his vetos were sustained in a hostile Congress, indicating the correctness of his decisions.

I recall one bill that would have authorized the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to reduce interest rates on home mortgages for middle-income families by making payments that would effectively limit the homeowner's payment to 6 percent interest. Needless to say, the costs of this bill were huge—as was its popularity. President Ford immediately saw the dangers, however, and he vetoed it without hesitating. The President believed that our nation must live within its means, and time and again he brought Congress along.

Carla Hills served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the Ford administration.

OF ETHICS AND FLINCHING

By Barber Conable

I served in the House under Gerald Ford for almost ten years, and when he was chosen as Vice President there was nothing I wanted to add or subtract from his public or private character to fit the country's need. From Gerald Ford you always got exactly what you expected; he was a direct, decent human being who could not be flattered beyond his limits and who knew how to accomplish what was needed within those limits. He invited diversity of viewpoint and debate as a necessary preliminary to decision—not because he was indecisive, but because he knew the nation depended on him to be thoughtful, dependable, and honest.

When I was a freshman congressman in 1965, Ford's family needed a new puppy, and I gave him a young golden retriever from a litter of my brother's dog. He insisted in return on paying $100 into my campaign fund, teaching me a lesson about accepting valuable gifts as a public official. I was struck by his concern about ethics and appearances.

In my second term, he explained to me that Republicans had to take the lead in changing the mindless operation of the seniority system in setting committee assignments. We made the needed changes within our Republican caucus, and the Democrats adopted the same rule two years later.

When events catapulted him into a wounded presidency, he did what was necessary, even when it would be politically damaging. He did not expect, and did not receive, mercy from the hostile Congress born of Watergate. But he did not flinch in doing his executive duty.

Barber Conable, former president of the World Bank, represented a congressional district in upstate New York for ten terms.

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President Ford speaks with *The American Enterprise*

We recently dispatched Ben Stein, former Nixon speechwriter, lawyer, and current host of "Win Ben Stein's Money" on Comedy Central, to interview Gerald Ford at his home in Palm Springs, California.

TAE: As a young congressman elected in 1948, what did you think of your colleague Richard Nixon?
FORD: I first met Richard Nixon the day I was sworn in. I was impressed then and my admiration increased as I observed his performance on the Committee on Education and Labor and the Un-American Activities Committee. He was a skillful legislator. In my first term I asked him to come to Grand Rapids for the annual Lincoln Day dinner.
TAE: When you first learned that you were under consideration to be Nixon's Vice President, did you consider saying no?
FORD: I never considered declining.
TAE: When you saw Nixon during his final months in office, did it look like the pressure was getting to him? Did he seem to be the person you had known for many years or had he changed?
FORD: He was different, and I can understand it because of the strain of Watergate, the war in Vietnam. I don't think it materially altered his capability to be President, but obviously, he was preoccupied by the problems that he faced.

The thing that worried me while I was House Minority Leader during Nixon's presidency were three people on his staff that I had many differences with: Haldeman, Ehrlichman, and Colson. They would meet with me and tell me the President wanted this or the President wanted that. I knew Nixon before they did, and I knew him better. So I would discount half of what that trio would allege.
TAE: In many ways the most controversial thing you have ever done in your political life was pardoning Richard Nixon. Did you agonize over it? Did you wonder if you'd done the wrong thing?
FORD: I agonized over it prior to my decision, but once I had made the decision I never had the slightest feeling I did the wrong thing. In fact, today my feeling is more forceful that I did the right thing.

When I became President my desk was piled high with economic problems: inflation was high, interest rates were high, unemployment was growing, we were facing a serious economic recession. At the same time, internationally, I had a scheduled meeting with Brezhnev within two months. I had the Yom Kippur War problems still chafing. I had the Nixon relationship with China. There was a whole shopping list of international problems.

The first month that I was President I spent 25 percent of my time listening to the Department of Justice lawyers, the White House lawyers, about what I should do with Nixon's tapes, his papers, everything else. My first press conference in the East Room, I thought I would be asked questions about the economy, about foreign policies. Nine out of ten questions were, "What are you going to do about Nixon?"

On the way back from the East Room to the Oval Office, I thought to myself, "Am I going to be plagued with that kind of press conference in perpetuity? Am I going to spend 25 percent of my time with the lawyers arguing about papers, tapes?"

So when I went back to the Oval Office, I got Phil Buchen, who was my counsel, and Al Haig and Don Rumsfeld, and I said, "Find out for me what my authority is to grant a pardon."

When Buchen came back and said I had the authority, I decided I was going to grant a pardon. It was solely a decision of my own. My staff were mostly opposed. But I was absolutely convinced it was the right thing to do, and I haven't changed my mind.
TAE: Was the selection of Nelson Rockefeller as your Vice President a mistake?
FORD: I selected Nelson Rockefeller because he was the best choice to balance my views and experience. He had vast experience in state government and earlier service in foreign affairs in the Department of State. His liberal Republicanism was a balance to my moderate views. The choice of Rockefeller was a plus—definitely not a mistake.
TAE: Did you think Chevy Chase's impression of you as a bumbler on "Saturday Night Live" was funny? Was it politically harmful?
FORD: I never watched the show. I guess I objected to it, but I learned a long time ago if you publicly object it just aggravates the situation. And having competed in athletics, where sportswriters are tougher than political writers, I learned you don't gain a thing by making an issue with a newsman. They're going to do what they want to, and if you criticize them, it gives them more space; so I just kept my mouth shut.
TAE: Squeaky Fromme and Sarah Jane Moore both tried to kill you in 1975. Have you ever had any contact with or communications from either woman over the years?
FORD: I got a letter from Squeaky Fromme, and I've forgotten when it was, in which she reiterated her attitude about me.
TAE: You mean she said she still wanted to kill you?
FORD: Well, in effect, yes.
TAE: Why?
FORD: I've forgotten the rationale. A few years ago I had what I call my special letter file evaluated by Sotheby's, because my attorney said I ought to have my effects appraised. I've been a great saver; I save letters from Presidents, other dignitaries. I saved this letter from Squeaky Fromme and it was the most valuable letter, they told me.
TAE: Did you imagine the possibility that you would actually have to launch nuclear missiles against Russia? Do you think you could have dispatched the Strategic Air Command if, say, the Russians had moved into Germany?
FORD: I was never confronted with that challenge.
TAE: I know, but did you ever think of it?
FORD: I don't like to speculate on unknown circumstances. My whole emphasis while I was in the White House was an effort to reduce the nuclear threshold and not build up a challenge that would require drastic action of the kind you've described.
TAE: How close did you really come to being Ronald Reagan's running mate in 1980?
FORD: In reality, there was never a possibility that I would be Ronald Reagan's running mate. A co-presidency would not have succeeded.
TAE: During Watergate it didn't take long for Republican partisanship to break down and for a significant number of Re-

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publicans to vote for the impeachment of President Nixon, whereas the Democrats maintained perfect party discipline in the Clinton impeachment. Do Democrats have some ability to maintain party discipline better than the Republicans?

FORD: Democrats seem to have better discipline. Republicans always seem to generate defectors, and that I think is unfortunate right now.

TAE: You, President Clinton, and I share having gone to Yale Law School.

FORD: And so did Hillary.

TAE: I think a lot of Clinton's obstructions of justice are based on what he learned of "legal realism" at Yale Law School: that law is what any person responsible for law makes of it, and that the person then rationalizes his decision later in terms of precedents. Do you think Clinton is in any specific way a product of Yale Law School? Do you consider yourself ideologically a product of Yale Law School?

FORD: When I was in Yale Law School from 1938 through 1941, I was more conservative than the majority of the faculty and probably more conservative than a majority of the students, but that was a good challenge to me. I learned from that conflict. I have always assumed that that philosophical view continued to prevail at Yale Law School and, if so, Clinton would fit right into that pattern, and so would Hillary.

TAE: If you could have a talk with Bill Clinton, what would you say to him about how he should prepare for life after the presidency?

FORD: He will be a very young ex-President. He should take some time before he makes a decision on what he ought to do. I can assure him he will receive many, many offers covering the spectrum—academic, business, what have you. He should be cautious about any conflict of interest. And he should take his time.

TAE: Do you think President Clinton has borrowed the GOP's best programs and proposals, especially on fiscal policy?

FORD: The first two years, in '93 and '94, he was espousing a typical liberal Democrat philosophy, best shown by the abortive health-care program. But when the Republicans won control of the Congress in '94, Clinton then, at least superficially, embraced many Republican programs, and he has continued to do that. He will be a superficial Republican as long as the Republicans control the Congress. If the Republicans had lost Congress, Clinton would have reverted back to his basic philosophy, which is liberal both at home and abroad.

TAE: What do you think of the level of military expenditures now?

FORD: I'm worried about the reduction from about $400 billion a year to the current level of $250 billion a year. I hope we're not going through the peak-and-valley process that we did after World War II, after Korea, after Vietnam, where we win a war and then in effect decimate our Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, so that we're unprepared for a new crisis, and it costs money and lives to rebuild.

TAE: Who did you think was the best president of the twentieth century? Besides yourself?

(Laughter)

FORD: On balance, I would say Dwight Eisenhower. He seemed to handle major problems and achieve success. You look at his economic polices, the record was good. You look at his foreign policies, it was good. I admired Nixon for his foreign policy, and Harry Truman for his foreign policy.

TAE: David Eisenhower, the President's grandson, has written that Dwight Eisenhower's lack of fear and ability to fight with his fists was a gigantic factor in his self-confidence. You were the boxing coach at Yale and obviously unafraid to fight. Do you think a man who is afraid to fight with his fists lacks some basic self-confidence?

FORD: I don't think a willingness to fight with your fists has any relationship to your willingness to stand up for a cause. Some people are just more combative physically, but I don't think that lends itself to a more adamant attitude in dealing with nonphysical issues.

TAE: Four consecutive Republican Presidents (Eisenhower, Nixon, you, and Reagan) played college football. Is this a mere coincidence?

FORD: The gridiron does not breed Republican Presidents. The list is purely coincidental.

TAE: Your children never seem to be in any kind of public trouble. What are the key ingredients of being a good father?

FORD: I can't claim any great credit because Betty was a superb mother. I was gone 200 nights a year when I was campaigning for our Republican candidates all over the country, and Betty was really not only a mother but a father.

On the other hand, when I was home, I made a major effort to develop a relationship with my children, and Betty and I always planned on a family vacation where we did things that the children enjoyed, like skiing, and we participated in.

TAE: Do you still ski?

FORD: I had to give skiing up six years ago because I had total knee-joint replacement. I skied 40 years, but my orthopedic surgeon, after fixing two knees with replacements, didn't recommend I ski any more.

TAE: Why did you retire to Palm Springs rather than Grand Rapids or somewhere else in Michigan?

FORD: While I was in Congress, Betty and I used to come out here during Easter vacation and spend a week with several couples from Southern California. So we made friends out here. And Betty has bad arthritis, which damp weather aggravates.

TAE: You are the last surviving member of the Warren Commission. Do you think that President Kennedy's assassination might have been connected in any way with Castro or with Khrushchev?

FORD: Absolutely not. Lee Harvey Oswald committed the assassination.

TAE: No foreign involvement or conspiracy, he acted alone?

FORD: Absolutely.

TAE: How would you like to be remembered in American history books?

FORD: I hope history will record that I became President in extremely challenging times, with most Americans disillusioned because of Watergate, the Vietnam War, and an economic recession, and that I restored public confidence and healed distrust of the nation's leaders and their government.

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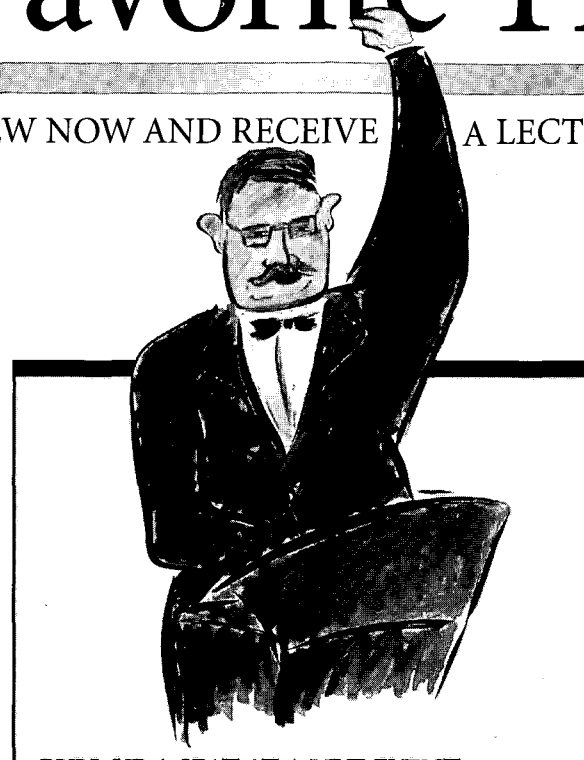

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Honest, Fair, Open-minded (what today's liberalism is not)

The founder of a small press that publishes conservative books recently told us a story illustrating the kinds of censorship he often endures from self-professed liberals.

That put us in mind of another description—from a professor who came up with some politically incorrect research findings—of similar closed-minded connivings.

We present their tales below.

BANNED BY THE FREE THINKERS

By Thomas Spence

Last year, the publishing house I head released a new book entitled *Domestic Tranquility: A Brief Against Feminism* by F. Carolyn Graglia. In the process we discovered what can happen to the truth when liberal dogma is at stake. Two small episodes illustrate this.

We had hoped to reproduce on the book's cover a painting from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts depicting Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, pointing to her children as her treasures—a tableau perfectly suited to Mrs. Graglia's book. To our surprise, the state-owned museum rebuffed our request without a word of explanation. When pressed, staff members claimed that the museum allows its paintings to be reproduced only in art books, but we suspected that someone in the "arts community" simply did not like the idea of a "brief against feminism."

Though the museum hotly denied any ideological animus, it eventually granted permission only when we promised to print a disclaimer of any endorsement by the museum of the author's views. Adding insult to injury, it demanded a fee many times what museums typically charge for book-cover art. Memos obtained under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act showed clearly enough the games the staff were playing with us, but by the time Governor George Allen ordered the museum to deal with us in good faith, we had had to send the book to the printer with another cover painting.

IN THE WORLD OF ART AND BOOKS, YOU CANNOT ASSUME THAT TODAY'S LIBERAL GATEKEEPERS ARE TELLING YOU THE TRUTH OR PLAYING ANYTHING LIKE FAIR.

Another reason the museum offered for denying permission was that it saw no publicity value in allowing us to use its art. In an ironic finish to the story, one of the first questions asked of Mrs. Graglia on C-SPAN's "Booknotes" was where we had obtained the painting for the cover of her book.

Once the book was published, the *Wall Street Journal* ran a favorable review that caught the eye of Dr. Laura Schlessinger—a very good eye to catch—and after she discussed the book on her radio program, our telephones rang off the hook for three days. Not all of Dr. Laura's listeners could get the book easily, however. We knew that a major book wholesaler had received 700 orders for *Domestic Tranquility* the day it was on Dr. Laura. (This information is available to publishers through an automated call-in system.) Yet the wholesaler was not ordering the books from us. When we called our account representative at the wholesaler, she denied any bookstores had requested the book and said she had no plans to order it. That sounded fishy not only to us but to a national bookstore chain that had placed a number of those orders. A telephone call from a vice president of the bookstore chain to higher-ups at the wholesaler resulted, miraculously, in the wholesaler's ordering 700 copies from us a half-hour later.

A little vigilance was all we needed to keep *Domestic Tranquility* on track, and the book has fared well. But in the world

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of art and books, you cannot assume that today's liberal gatekeepers are telling you the truth or playing anything like fair.

Thomas Spence is the founder of Spence Publishing Company in Dallas.

REFUSING TO LET FACTS GET IN THE WAY OF A GOOD STORY

By John R. Lott, Jr.

I am an academic economist who decided to undertake large statistical studies of the effects that gun availability has on crime and death rates. To my surprise, I found that making it easier for everyday citizens to own guns actually reduced violence and crime rather than increasing it, as gun-control advocates maintain.

When my original study was released, I gave copies to anyone who had shown any interest, and asked for suggestions while I was revising it for publication in the *Journal of Legal Studies.* Few comments were offered to me, but once the paper began to receive national press coverage, the attacks came very quickly.

Before this press coverage started it proved extremely difficult to get even a single proponent of gun control to offer comments on my paper. I was going to be summarizing my findings at a public symposium in August 1996, and to assure that we were fair and scientifically balanced I wanted a respondent critical of my work to speak. I approached 22 gun-control advocates before Jens Ludwig, a young assistant professor at Georgetown University, accepted my request to comment on the paper.

One of the more interesting experiences occurred when I asked Susan Glick, of the Violence Policy Center, to participate. Glick, whom I called during June 1996, was one of the last people I approached. She was unwilling to comment at my public talk because she didn't want to "help give any publicity to the paper." Glick said that her appearance might help bring media attention to the research that it wouldn't otherwise receive. When I pointed out that C-SPAN was likely to cover the event, she said she didn't care because "we can get good media whenever we want." When I asked her if I could at least send her a copy of the paper because I would appreciate any comments that she might have, she said, "Forget it, there is no way that I am going to look at it. Don't send it."

However, when the publicity broke on my research with an article in *USA Today* on August 2, she was among the many people who left telephone messages immediately asking for a copy of the paper. In her case, the media were calling, and she "need[ed] [my] paper to be able to criticize it." Because of all the commotion that day, I was unable to get back to her right away. ABC News was doing a TV report on my study for that day, and when at around 3:00 P.M. the ABC reporter, Barry Serafin, called to say certain objections had been raised about my paper, he mentioned that one of those who had criticized it was Ms. Glick.

I ASKED HOW SHE COULD HAVE SAID THAT THERE WERE FLAWS IN THE PAPER WITHOUT EVEN HAVING LOOKED AT IT YET. AT THAT POINT MS. GLICK HUNG UP THE TELEPHONE.

After talking to Mr. Serafin, I gave Glick a call to ask her if she still wanted a copy of my paper. She said that she wanted it sent to her right away and wondered if I could fax it to her. I then noted that her request seemed strange because I had just gotten off the telephone with Mr. Serafin at ABC News, who had told me she had been very critical of the study, saying that it was "flawed." I asked how she could have said that there were flaws in the paper without even having looked at it yet. At that point Ms. Glick hung up the telephone.

This was not my only experience with Ms. Glick. On August 8, 1996, six days after the events of August 2, described above, I appeared with her on MSNBC. After I tried to make an introductory statement setting out my findings, Ms. Glick attacked me with the claim that I was a paid "shill" for gun manufacturers and not an objective academic. She also claimed there were many serious problems with the paper. She asserted the study was a fraud.

I responded that these were very serious charges, and untrue. I told her that unless she had some evidence for her personal attacks we should talk about the issues involved in the study.

At this point the moderator broke in and said to Ms. Glick that he agreed that these were very serious charges, and he asked her what evidence she had for her statements. Glick responded that she had lots of evidence and that it was quite obvious to her that this study had been done to benefit gun manufacturers.

The moderator then asked her to comment further on her claim that there were serious problems with the study, and she stated that one only had to go to page two before finding a problem. Her concern was that I had used data for Florida that was a year and a half old. The moderator then asked her why this was a problem, since I couldn't be expected to use data that was, say, as recent as last week. Ms. Glick responded by saying that a lot of things could have changed since. I then mentioned that I had obtained more recent data since the study had been written, and that the pattern of people using guns lawfully and productively had held true from October 1987 to December 31, 1995, roughly half a year ago.

It didn't matter. I was dealing with a gun-control ideologue, not someone open to facts. The next year I had another exchange on MSNBC with a different gun-control activist. The same accusations were repeated as if they had never been refuted.

John Lott teaches law and economics at the University of Chicago. This is adapted from his book More Guns, Less Crime.

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A point here, a point there,

and a lot of bull in between.

Let's face it. The mainstream media in America has gotten a little wild and woolly when it comes to the truth. Hit and miss. Maybe even a little bit skewed one way or another. We think its high time to grab the truth by the horns and straighten things out.

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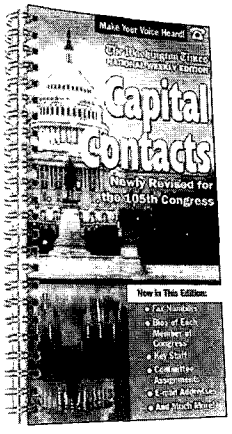

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In Real Life

FIRST-PERSON AMERICA

TAX TORTURE

By Blake Hurst

TARKIO, MISSOURI—It's tax time again. One of the real disadvantages of being a self-employed farmer is income tax. Not because you pay more income taxes than other people do—because you don't—but because of the time, record-keeping, and moral questions involved. In fact, farmers like me, as a class, pay fewer taxes than almost anybody. Every year, the USDA estimates farm income. Every year, the IRS estimates how much income farmers report on Schedule F. Not surprisingly, these two estimates differ by billions of dollars. There are many reasons for the discrepancy, not all of them involving chicanery.

Tax time on our farm starts before the end of the calendar year, when spending for tax purposes occurs. Farmers pay taxes on a cash basis, which means that inventory is not taken into account when income is calculated. This leads to a decision, usually in about the second or third year of farming, to buy your next year's seed corn before the end of this year. This lowers your tax liability for that year, since you've purchased two years of seed corn in the same year. The next December, when you start trying to figure your tax liability for the coming year, you make a terrible discovery: Since you haven't bought any seed corn this year, your income has jumped. The solution is clear. Buy next year's seed corn. But since you are still liable for more taxes than you want to pay (which is by definition always true), and the local fertilizer dealer is offering early season discounts, you also purchase next year's fertilizer. After several years, all inputs for the coming year are purchased in December, and you've totally lost any flexibility at all. Which leads to the purchase of a new pickup. The old one would have probably held together for another year, but you are, after all, liable for more taxes than you want to pay, and besides, those new pickups really do look sharp.

Farmers get paid when they sell grain, or livestock, or in my case, flowers. Income taxes aren't withheld when sales are made. And, unlike most businesses, farmers don't pay estimated taxes, because our incomes are so variable. Instead, my taxes are due, in one lump sum, on March 1. Paying all of your income and social security taxes with one check tends to concentrate the mind wonderfully. It is always the largest check I write each year, and that includes those years when we have purchased farmland. The one change in tax law sure to remake the political landscape would be to repeal income tax withholding and require taxes to be paid by check. It is no accident that farmers tend to be conservative in their voting habits.

DEDUCTING THE COST OF MY OVERALLS ACTUALLY INCREASES UNCLE SAM'S TAKE, RIGHT?

Each year, the toughest decisions at tax time involve the deductibility of certain items we purchase. For example, overalls. Now, by a strict interpretation of the rules, my normal attire would not be a deductible expense. But, I wouldn't wear overalls if I weren't a farmer, and specialized protective gear required for an occupation is, as I understand it, deductible. And overalls are necessary for several reasons. First, like most farmers, I have a paunch. I like to say that I wear the same size pants I did 20 years ago—just four inches lower. Overalls allow me to carry my excess poundage in comfort, and are truly necessary to my identity. Second, I always carry about 20 pounds of essential tools stowed in the numerous pockets and hammer loops provided by my bib overalls. I carry pliers, hammer, pocketknife, black tape, vise grips, and usually a voltmeter. Without overalls, this extra weight would force me to spend hours each day hitching up my pants. That time is now spent productively, which increases my income, and the taxes I pay. So, to look at the question totally objectively, deducting the cost of my overalls actually increases Uncle Sam's take.

The worst part of tax preparation is depreciable items. Again, there is a large gray area here when it comes to what is depreciable and what is not. Depreciation schedules are a nightmare. I have items on what seems like at least ten different schedules, and must decipher instructions about recapture, month put in service, salvage value, and acronyms like MACRS, HY, MQ, or GDS. Which leads me to use my own acronym for that whole section, which I fill out using the DIIK system, for Damned If I Know. What I do know is this: If my Section 179 property is improperly applied under the five-year recovery period by using the mid-year convention, and I confuse double declining balance with an irrevocable decision to use the straight line method, I could be looking at a five- to seven-year recovery period in Leavenworth.

So far, I've survived tax season without undue attention from those wonderful public servants who staff the IRS. Oh, I've received a few notices about mistakes, and once had to pay some penalties for late withholding on my employees, about which the IRS has absolutely no sense of humor

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about, but I've avoided the dreaded audit notice. I attribute my escape to this date totally to good fortune, and spend a few sleepless nights every February while preparing my forms. And, if anyone at the IRS should happen to read this, I really wouldn't dream of deducting my overalls.

Blake Hurst is a TAE *contributing writer.*

BURGER QUEEN

By Erin Sharp

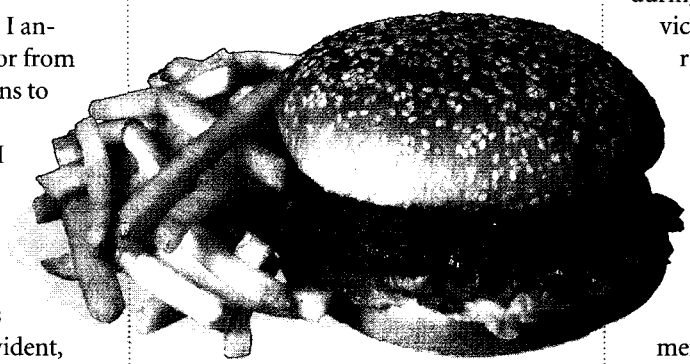
ITHACA, NEW YORK—When I announced the change of my major from biology with pre-med aspirations to English, my advisor simply raised an eyebrow and asked if I planned to work at McDonald's for the rest of my life. "Actually," I quipped, "I've been working at McDonald's for two and a half years, and it's sort of fun." His surprise was evident, a typical reaction to my shocking side occupation. I spoke the truth, though; I have held a dozen jobs ranging from camp counselor to pathologist's assistant (now including, I suppose, freelance journalism), yet none have been as entertaining as my stints at the Golden Arches.

My double life as Erin Sharp, Ivy League McDonald's Worker, has revealed twin stereotypes to me. People told I go to Cornell view me as bright and ambitious. Put me behind the counter at McDonald's, however, and I am usually assumed to be a high school dropout with fifteen unseen piercings.

When I was six years old, McDonald's was my favorite place to eat, and kids have not changed much in the last dozen years. I am often asked whether I have actually met "The Ronald" McDonald, and have been given letters to pass along to him, like one of Santa Claus's elves. Among kids, McDonald's workers rank right up there with policemen and firefighters.

Yet this perspective rarely survives adolescence. Respect for the workers of the fast food industry is lost among most adults, with absurd results. Many adults seem to assume that McWorkers are stupid, attempting to scam us out of free food and coupons. The depths of tackiness to which some human beings will stoop in order to save a few pennies at a drive-thru window are worthy of "Candid Camera." Grown men driving Lincoln Town Cars have bickered with me for five minutes over a measly ten-cent increase in the price of an Egg McMuffin. Perhaps they imagine that I overcharge each patron and hoard misbegotten dimes in a piggy bank behind the shake machine?

GROWN MEN DRIVING LINCOLN TOWN CARS HAVE BICKERED WITH ME FOR FIVE MINUTES OVER A MEASLY TEN-CENT INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF AN EGG MCMUFFIN.



Once, my store even received a phone call at noon from a furious woman demanding reimbursement for the breakfast she had bought that morning via drive-thru; apparently, it was cold when she arrived at work over an hour later. Our most famous TIC (Truculent, Irate Customer) lost her temper when we could not (in her eyes, would not) provide the grilled chicken sandwich she craved in the middle of breakfast rush hour. An entirely new traffic pattern was created in Drive-Thru for the 25 minutes spent in fruitless argument and accommodation attempts by our managers as the grill team thawed frozen meat, heated a grill to cook on and produced the coveted sandwich for her. When at last presented with it, she lofted the bag triumphantly and accused us of withholding it from her for the entire time, then zoomed off with the last words: "I'm never coming back here again!" The effectiveness of this condemnation was tempered by her license plate, which proclaimed her to be from Delaware—over an hour away.

A small portion of our patrons are so confused that there is really nothing to do but wait for them to leave. My most prominent example of this sort of "guest" is the infamous Snack Attack Lady, who ordered hotcakes and sausage during our 90-second-guaranteed-service hour and then ate her breakfast right outside the drive-thru window. Heedless of the frenzied honking behind her, she carefully opened the platter, poured a puddle of syrup, rolled the sausage in a hotcake and dipped both daintily into the syrup. My coworkers and I watched in speechless amazement. When asked what she was doing, she rolled her eyes and snapped, "What does it look like I'm doing? I'm eating my breakfast!" That woman has permanently forfeited all rights to complain about slow drive-thru service.

And yet, there are some great customers out there, like the Morning Crew: the seven retired men and one active police officer who wait for our doors to open every day so that they can enjoy their dawn coffee and conversation. If I missed a day of work, I would return to inquiries about my health and concern that all was well. The greatest customers ever to grace our store were two deliverymen who drove up to the window one spring afternoon two years ago with armfuls of roses for my coworker and me. They were moving their business out of state, they explained, and wanted to thank us for making their afternoons brighter.

Well, boys, if you are reading this article, thank you again for that fabulous surprise. I still have the ribbon which bound them.

Erin Sharp is a sophomore at Cornell.

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Keep Uncle Sam Out of the Stock Market

In his State of the Union address, President Clinton proposed investing some $700 billion of the Social Security Trust Fund in the stock market. Give him credit for admitting that the current program generates a rate of return on your "investment" that would cost a Wall Street money manager his job. The President's scheme for having Uncle Sam buy stocks directly, however, is riddled with economic and political perils.

In particular, his call for a Social Security portfolio "free from politics" is fanciful at best and another lie at worst. Portfolio managers in the private sector are required by law to maximize returns for future retirees. But the administrators of pension plans for state and local governments often pursue quite different goals.

Public-sector pension funds are littered with politically favored investments that have blown away in the economic winds. For instance, the Kansas Public Employees' Retirement System recently lost $65 million in Kansas-based Home Savings Association, $14 million in Tallgrass Technologies, and about $8 million in a local steel mill, reports Heritage Foundation analyst Daniel Mitchell. In 1990, the State of Connecticut Trust Fund put $25 million into Colt Industries, a local gunmaker. In 1993, Colt misfired, and the money vanished.

Public portfolios also are battered by political correctness. During the mid-1980s dozens of states, cities, and public universities ditched their shares in companies that conducted business in South Africa. Others were pressured to dump stocks of firms that helped produce nuclear weapons. Eleven states curbed investments in Northern Ireland. The city of Philadelphia sold its Texaco shares in 1996 when Jesse Jackson screamed "racism!" San Francisco has used its pension investments to pressure companies to change their corporate policies on sex and family issues.

Minnesota's public employees lost $2 million last year when their state fund dumped its tobacco holdings. In April 1998, New York State Comptroller Carl McCall said he would withhold his support at shareholders' meetings from the boards of Philip Morris, RJR Nabisco, and Loew's if they didn't negotiate a tobacco settlement with state prosecutors. In July, McCall and New York City Comptroller Alan Hevesi threatened to exclude Swiss banks from managing municipal pension funds and other New York assets unless the Swiss settled a lawsuit with Jewish groups over Holocaust-era dormant accounts. The Swiss banking industry caved in like a chocolate soufflé before the restrictions even took effect.

Conservative activists have joined in the fun, too. Last July, after family activists protested, the Texas State Board of Education decided to sell $46.4 million of Disney stock to protest violent films from Disney's Miramax subsidiary.

Squandering money on pet causes and distorting investment decisions for political reasons are not the only dangers of government portfolio management. Old-fashioned safe-cracking is also a serious problem. In fiscal years '93 and '94, California diverted $1.36 billion in pension contributions to balance its budget. New York State similarly siphoned its employees' retirement fund for $230 million in 1995. Just last summer, Chicago used $12.5 million in pension contributions for interest payments it owed creditors.

Can anyone trust Congress and the White House not to plunder a federal pension portfolio? A $700 billion honey pot will attract lobbyists, spending advocates, and PAC men like grizzly bears. Presidents, senators, and congressmen would gain a golden opportunity to sell Wall Street firms "access" to this largesse.

Activists on the left already are licking their chops over what could become government's biggest chow-down yet. The AFL-CIO's Gerald Shea has predicted that federal investment in the stock market would "have a good effect on how corporate America operates." Democratic Representative Jerrold Nadler of Manhattan's Upper West Side recently told *The Village Voice* that he savored this potential federal feast: "You're saying the government will have more influence to pressure for more decent, socially responsible corporate behavior. That's terrible?"

Add to these problems the usual inefficiencies and corruptions that plague government spending, and it becomes impossible to deny the folly of allowing federal bureaucrats to invest America's retirement nest eggs. Already, the economic cronyism practiced on a limited scale by state and local governments wastes billions of dollars. (Yale professor Roberta Romano estimates $28 billion in total losses just between 1985 and '89.) If the federal government were allowed to invest Social Security contributions, vastly larger distortions would result. "Even with Herculean efforts, I doubt if it would be feasible to insulate, over the long run, the trust funds from political pressure—direct and indirect—to allocate capital to less than its most productive use," warned Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan on January 28. Indeed, he noted, federal investment of Social Security funds "would arguably put at risk the efficiency of our capital markets, and thus our economy."

—Deroy Murdock

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the Tax Reform Economist

The Case for a Tax Cut NOW

(AND TAX REFORM NOT LONG AFTER)

By Lawrence B. Lindsey

U.S. leaders are relying too heavily on an expansive monetary policy to sustain our growing economy. Fiscal policies, meanwhile, are quite tight. While that has helped produce a budget surplus by squeezing lots of dollars out of taxpayers, it is straining the larger economy and putting the present expansion at risk. The most important single action the present Congress could undertake would be to alleviate some of the strain with a major across-the-board reduction in tax rates.

This tax reduction would significantly ease the intense pressure now placed on monetary policy to sustain the current American economic expansion, and indirectly, the growth in global output. In so doing, it would restore a much more prudent and balanced mix of fiscal and monetary policy to our nation. It should be viewed as an insurance policy designed to preserve the current U.S. expansion until such time as economic conditions improve abroad.

An across-the-board tax cut is not a substitute for much needed reform of our tax system. I would hope Congress might begin that process as well. But given the long lead time involved in preparing and enacting such legislation, I do not believe we can reasonably expect fundamental tax reform legislation to be passed quickly enough to meet the needs of the present business cycle. Fundamental tax reform would be a boon to the long-term growth of our nation's economy. But our most important problem is not our economy's long-term health—which I believe to be quite promising—it is the massive imbalance that has emerged in our economy, which could derail our present business-cycle expansion.

As recently as 1996, the Congressional Budget Office projected that the upcoming year's budget deficit would be roughly $250 billion. Instead, we now project a surplus of some $50 billion.

One reason for this surprise has been improved economic growth. The economy has grown at a real rate of about 3.6 percent over the last three years, instead of the expected 2.5 percent. Thus, GDP is about 3.5 percent larger than one might have expected just three years ago.

IN THE LAST THREE YEARS, PERSONAL INCOME TAXES HAVE SHOT UP 43 PERCENT—TWO AND ONE-HALF TIMES FASTER THAN PERSONAL INCOME. THE SHARE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH GOING TO WASHINGTON IS NOW AT A RECORD LEVEL.

More importantly, the federal government is scooping up a sharply bigger share of economic production in taxes. The fraction of GDP going to federal taxes has risen from 20.0 percent in 1995 to 21.8 percent in 1998. This factor is roughly three times as important as the extra economic growth in producing today's unanticipated budget surplus. Or to put it differently, extra federal taxes took a third of the total growth in GDP between 1995 and '98. Federal tax revenue rose in this period by $390 billion—an extraordinary expansion of taxation, and one that mostly came from taxes on individual incomes.

Corporate income taxes and social insurance taxes like Social Security have risen at about the same rate as the GDP; other taxes, such as excises, have been relatively static. But in the last three years personal income taxes have shot up 43 percent—two and one-half times faster than personal income.

While we cannot know precisely who paid these extra taxes, I estimate that most of this surge comes from the upper brackets of the income tax and also the special capital gains tax rate. (Capital gains tax *revenues* have boomed as the tax *rate* on capital gains has been cut.) Together, the share of federal taxes raised from the special capital gains tax and upper-bracket income taxpayers increased from about 31 percent in 1995 to 36 percent in '98.

The primary cause is the enormous run-up in the stock market. The Dow Jones Industrial Average has roughly doubled since 1995. The Standard & Poor's index has grown even faster. (Strikingly, while the stock market has doubled, taxes from corporate profits—which closely track corporate profits—have risen only 15 percent, or roughly in line with GDP. So the boom in the stock market is not linked to greater corporate profitability.)

The net result: The government is collecting a record amount of revenue relative to the size of the economy. Both tax burdens and the share of economic growth going to federal revenue are now at record levels. A disproportionate share

Lawrence Lindsey, a former governor of the Federal Reserve Board, is a resident scholar at AEI, and a principal economic adviser to Governor George W. Bush.

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of this extra revenue is coming from upper-income taxpayers through higher income tax payments, mostly thanks to the booming stock market. These trends have important implications for the stock market, for future tax collections, and for the economy in general.

Stocks are now valued at all-time record highs, relative to the size of the economy, to the level of corporate earnings, and to the rate of stock dividends. Standard methods of measuring stock values suggest that a significant slump in the market would be understandable. A slump would adversely affect personal income, federal tax revenue, and national economic momentum.

If, as I believe, the current stock market-induced boom is unsustainable under current policies, then two courses of action present themselves. I admit they are, at least superficially, a bit contradictory. But the key disparity involves timing, not fundamentals.

First, if today's tax revenue surge is temporary, it would certainly not be prudent to make any long-term commitments with these resources. In particular, one should not use temporary revenue to expand permanent consumption-based programs. Entitlement programs are the most common form of such programs. If these programs are expanded, or in the case of Social Security maintained at current benefit levels, and today's tax revenue surge were to stop, the country would be forced to support a permanently higher level of consumption on a lower level of income.

It is a rare government program that can be terminated when economic conditions change. Indeed, when the economy turns down it is often argued that the program is needed even more. Best, then, to view the current budget surplus as a windfall and refrain from spending it. Unfortunately, this decision guarantees the windfall will indeed be temporary, because it leaves the unsustainable existing policy in place.

The second approach one might take to this set of circumstances is to make prudent policy "investments" that would help extend our current economic expansion. That is, we could use the existing windfall to fix today's economic imbalances. Without question, the most simple and direct means of doing so would be to pass a two- or three-year temporary cut in income tax rates.

Think of this tax cut as an insurance policy. It would maintain household cash flow even if the stock market were to decline, because overall spending in the economy would not be adversely affected by trouble in the financial markets. Without such an insurance policy, a stock market decline would lead the entire economy to contract. This would lower profits and incomes still further, causing further financial distress; thereby lowering stock prices further and sparking an even greater cutback by consumers. In short, a tax cut is insurance against a recession caused by trouble in the financial markets. And, as I view trouble in financial markets as likely, "buying" such insurance is prudent fiscal policy.

A TAX CUT WOULD BE INSURANCE AGAINST A RECESSION CAUSED BY TROUBLE IN THE STOCK MARKET—WHICH IS CURRENTLY OVERHEATED.

One might argue that given the length of the current economic expansion and the excessive optimism in financial markets, an economic downturn is not only due, but would be cathartic. While this view is not entirely without merit, special circumstances make it absolutely imperative to preserve the existing economic expansion in the United States.

The primary danger is that the rest of the world is in perilous economic shape. Asia remains deeply mired in recession with little hope of recovery this year or next. Europe, though still growing, faces economic forecasts that are constantly being lowered. The reasons for those drooping forecasts are many, but they center on Europe's need for the kind of deregulation and restructuring that took place in this country during the last two decades. Meanwhile, much of the rest of the world, particularly Latin America and the Middle East, face deteriorating economic fundamentals.

In this environment, a recession in the United States would surely tip the planet into the first global downturn since the 1930s. The consequences would not be attractive. First, it would be more difficult for the United States to recover from its own recession if it were a part of a global downturn. Complicating this would be a likely rise in protectionist sentiment around the world. As the United States has become the premier organizer of global economic activity, we would be the primary losers from such a development.

More importantly, the political risks a global downturn poses to the advance of democratic capitalism cannot be underrated. The last time we had a global recession—the 1930s—both democracy and capitalism were set back many years. Political instability throughout the world is already growing, and potential dictators are everywhere raising their voices, promising troubled electorates an easy way out that avoids economic competition abroad and political competition at home.

On the other hand, both Japan and Europe seem to be undergoing significant structural improvements that could lay the groundwork for a more permanent base of economic growth in two or three years. At that time, the world's need to maintain American economic growth would be significantly reduced. Any American recession occurring then would be shallower and shorter-lived because robust demand from Europe and Asia would buy some of the goods that our overextended consumers could not.

In sum, Congress and the Clinton administration now have a choice to make: Let economic forces run their course at considerable national risk, or "buy" some insurance against what might come. Quite a bit is at stake: not only the economic expansion, but the balance sheet of the household sector, the financial markets, and the tax revenue surge which is giving us our first federal surpluses in many years.

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The tax cut I recommend would get us safely into the new millennium. What should our tax policy aim for in the years that follow? In just four words: Broader Base, Lower Rates.

There is a general consensus among economists in favor of a broad tax base with low rates. Ten to 15 years ago it seemed a bipartisan political consensus had also emerged in favor of this objective. At that time Senator Bradley of New Jersey and Congressman Gephardt of Missouri, both Democrats, sponsored legislation to eliminate tax shelters and lower the top tax rate to 26 percent. President Reagan proposed a comprehensive tax reform proposal to broaden the base in 1985. In 1986 these concepts were enshrined into law: The income tax base was broadened significantly and the top tax rate was reduced to 28 percent, although the benefits of lower rates were reduced by a temporarily higher tax rate of 33 percent. The 1990 budget legislation created a uniform 31 percent top bracket, but then began a phase-out of itemized deductions in the higher tax brackets, which raised the effective top tax rate to nearly 32 percent.

Unfortunately, tax policy during the 1990s has moved in the opposite direction, away from the principle of Broader Base, Lower Rates. First, rates were increased significantly in the 1993 tax legislation—to an effective rate of 40.8 percent. On top of this, the cap on the Medicare tax was removed, adding a further 2.9 percentage points to the top tax rate.

But the most troubling development in tax policy has been the adoption of various phase-outs, including a phase-out for personal exemptions, as a person's income rises. This latter phase-out raises effective tax rates by roughly one percentage point for every individual in the taxpaying household. And not only do these changes raise marginal rates, they do so in a way which decidedly complicates the tax return.

I recently thumbed through my instructions for form 1040. There was the state and local tax refund worksheet, the simplified method worksheet for annuities, the Social Security benefits worksheet, the IRA deduction worksheet, the student loan interest deduction worksheet, a special standard deduction worksheet for non-itemizers which was separate from the calculation limiting itemized deductions for high income itemizers, the personal exemptions worksheet, the child tax credit worksheet, and a worksheet to see if I needed to do the alternative minimum tax calculation, which if I passed, would require yet another calculation.

A RECESSION IN THE U.S. WOULD SURELY TIP THE PLANET INTO THE FIRST GLOBAL DOWNTURN SINCE THE 1930S. AND THE LAST TIME WE HAD A GLOBAL RECESSION BOTH CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY WERE SET BACK MANY YEARS.

This is not what was meant by Broader Base, Lower Rates. Indeed, the idea has been turned on its head. The President speaks of "targeted tax relief." Targeted relief means, by definition, a narrower tax base. Some economic activity becomes tax favored, while other forms of economic activity must carry higher marginal rates to make up the difference.

I well understand that such targeting lets politicians claim they care about a "special need." But this case-by-case approach puts special interests ahead of the national interest of an efficient and simplified tax code. The bipartisan consensus for a broader base and lower rates emerged in the 1980s precisely because special-interest lobbying had made our tax code so complex, favoring the politically connected few over fairness for all. It's a shame to see the political process running in reverse during the 1990s. With luck, the '90s will prove to be politically aberrant.

The move toward higher rates has caused economic distortions. The most obvious damage has been an over-emphasis on capital gains, thanks to their lower tax rates, or toward untaxed or lightly taxed transactions that result from merger activity. Many corporations have opted for stock buyback strategies as a way of distributing earnings to shareholders in a tax-favored way. Dividend payments have collapsed.

In 1993, $100 invested in the S&P returned $4.46 in earnings and $2.78 in dividends. In mid-1998, that same $100 returned $3.44 in earnings and only $1.47 in dividends. And the really hot stock markets, particularly the NASDAQ, are dominated by companies that pay no dividends at all.

What is wrong with this? In one sense, nothing, if the result were not driven by tax considerations. Markets should provide a return to investors in the manner most preferred by those investors. But taxes are distorting the preferences of investors in a way that contributes to three of the excesses we now see in the market. First, tax considerations favor hot new stocks with little or no earnings history over established companies. Second, tax considerations favor stock buy-backs that shrink the total supply of stock in the market. Third, tax considerations discourage companies from paying dividends, which means corporate managers, rather than individual investors, decide where to allocate invested capital.

All three of these phenomena are directly tied to a tax policy geared to politically targeting taxes—leading to higher rates applied over a narrower and more politically determined tax base. The tax policies of the 1990s have thus exacerbated some national weaknesses. Like today's over-reliance on the stock market boom to stoke the nation's economic engine, this could produce an end result that we will all regret. But both our excessive taxes and our politically distorted distribution of the tax burden can be fixed if politicians will only act before damage is done.

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the Tax Reform Economist II

Free Market Opportunity on Savings Accounts

By John Hood

Amidst the appalling laundry list of new giveaways President Clinton proposed in his recent State of the Union address was one idea—allowing families to open Universal Savings Accounts (USAs) and make tax-deductible contributions in them—which deserves support. Unwittingly, the President has opened up an opportunity to restart the stalled tax reform movement and combine free-market principles on education and health care with the political advantages of sweeping tax relief.

The USA concept has long bounced around tax policy circles. Its most recent incarnation was a mid-1990s plan by Senator Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) and former Senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) that got lost in the hoopla over flashier flat tax and national sales tax proposals. A precedent for USAs was established in the 1997 budget deal, which for the first time allowed penalty-free withdrawals from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) for education, medical expenses, or the first purchase of a home. The '97 budget also created a new category of Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs) that now allow families to save up to $500 a year for college expenses and pay no taxes on the account's earnings. The major innovations associated with Clinton's new USA proposal are that (1) it would allow families to put in more than the $2,000 per wage-earner limit on IRA deposits, and (2) it would offer less affluent families "seed money" and matching contributions, derived from projected federal budget surpluses, to encourage them to open USAs.

John Hood is author of The Heroic Enterprise: Business and the Common Good, *and president of the John Locke Foundation.*

Reaction from conservatives to Clinton's plan was mixed. Some praised the concept of encouraging tax-free savings, seeing it as a step toward Social Security privatization. But others criticized the notion of the government providing matching funds and suggested that USAs would represent yet another set of loopholes in an already porous tax code.

But tax-free savings accounts have far greater potential—both as policy and as politics—than many free-marketeers realize. First off, they are hugely popular.

CONSERVATIVES WILL MAKE PROGRESS IN REFORMING TAXES, EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE. FAMILIES WILL GAIN MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES AND BE LESS RELIANT ON GOVERNMENT. APPRECIATION OF FREE MARKETS WILL RISE. IS THERE A DOWNSIDE TO THIS STRATEGY?

About half of American households own stocks in some form, primarily through tax-deferred IRAs, 401(k) accounts, or a pension fund. This massive new "investor class" has an insatiable appetite for financial news and has shown remarkable sophistication during recent Wall Street turbulence, declining to sell out at the first sign of trouble. The new ESAs and a host of companion, state-sponsored investment accounts for college expenses are also attracting a lot of interest. Aligning oneself and one's party with the investor class will be an essential element of a future political majority coalition, whether it is a left-center version (Clinton's mix of Robert Rubin economics and Hollywood lifestyle liberalism) or a right-center one.

Second, the expansion of tax-free savings offers Republicans an excellent opportunity to promote an alternative free-market agenda on education and health care—issues high in the national consciousness, and ones on which Democrats enjoy 20-point margins in the polls. The conservative position on both education and health care should be that consumers, not bureaucrats, should be in control and making their own decisions. An excellent way to promote consumer choice and discourage government growth in both areas would be to give families the means of accumulating assets to cover these costs, money that they alone would manage and disburse.

Recognizing that Educational Savings Accounts could help fuel the national move toward school choice, Senator Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.) last year introduced an expanded version of the accounts that would allow families to make withdrawals from them not just for college expenses but also for primary and secondary schools, tutoring programs, and other educational undertakings. This was the one idea emanating out of Republican circles in the past couple of years that showed real signs of innovation and bipartisan appeal. Because of the implacable resistance of the teachers' unions President Clinton ultimately vetoed the

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popular proposal, with as little public attention as he could manage.

A similar situation exists in the health care arena. For years conservatives have talked up Medical Savings Accounts as an alternative to managed care or government control of medical decisions. Unfortunately, MSAs have yet to spread into the general population, despite a couple of pilot programs approved by Congress. The problem is that the rules and regulations surrounding MSAs are far too strict, and the nature of pilot programs themselves leaves insurers and financial service companies uninterested in spending a lot of time and money learning how to structure and market a product that might not exist in five years. For MSAs to replace cumbersome insurance claims and bureaucratic red tape they will probably need, for instance, special debit cards that allow withdrawals for medical expenses at doctor's offices, hospitals, or pharmacies. Under today's uncertain tax and regulatory conditions no one will pay the up-front costs for establishing them.

ESAs and MSAs were promising starts, but the response to Clinton's new USA plan should be bolder. Republicans should counterpropose not just that deposits into and earnings of USAs be tax-deductible, but that withdrawals for educational or medical expenses be deductible, too. The prospect of a family accumulating tens of thousands of dollars in USAs, with which they can escape the control of public school monopolies, onerous HMOs, and government regulators, should be an enticing one.

Ultimately, things like disability and unemployment protection and retirement savings could be added into the mix—allowing workers and employers to re-direct the payroll taxes they currently send to government (to be squandered on poorly operating programs) into their USAs, from which they could make withdrawals as they navigated various phases of their lives

In the long run, USAs become godsends. The demography of the Baby Boom threatens not just Social Security but also Medicare and Medicaid. Families should be allowed to prepare for the inevitable failure of these government programs to meet the rising costs associated with an aging population.

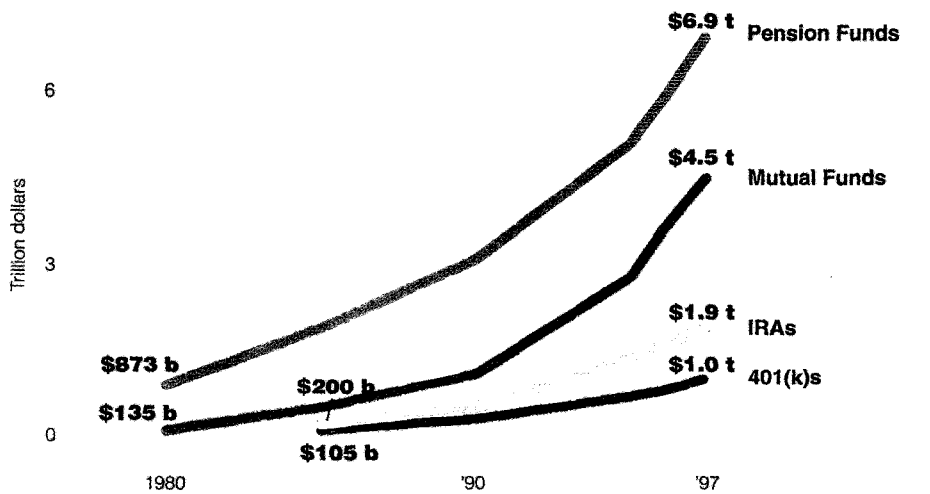
Nor would expanded USAs be inconsistent with principled tax reform. Indeed, they represent the most politically palatable way to achieve it. Our current system imposes multiple layers of taxation on savings—first when they are earned, then when they accumulate interest, again at death. It also discriminates against workers who buy their own health insurance or send their children to non-government schools. An expanded USA would address these problems, and place opponents of tax reform in the awkward position of opposing middle-class dreams of financial security, a nursing home for grandma, private school or college for the kids, and a comfortable retirement.

Broad Universal Savings Accounts could be used to wean Americans off of the modern welfare state. This would have dramatic social and even moral consequences. As *Dead Right* author David Frum has pointed out, increased dependence on government to assist families with the big-ticket items of life—health care, education, unemployment, disability, and retirement—fosters an unhealthy society. People look to Washington, rather than to Main Street and Wall Street, as the generators of the wealth they need to maintain and improve their standard-of-living.

In recent decades, public support for the free-enterprise system in general and corporations in specific has been eroding. In the midst of the Great Depression, polls showed that most Americans believed their interests and those of businesses were fundamentally the same. Today, despite a two-decade-long economic boom and a generally rosy public outlook for the future, most Americans say that corporations have fundamentally different interests, make too much profit, and are insufficiently taxed and regulated. By making citizens and businesses allies in pursuit of prosperity, rather than linking American fortunes and dreams to the promises of politicians, USAs offer hope of reversing this troubling trend.

Clinton won't like a Republican version of USAs (call them Unlimited Savings Accounts), but he will be forced to talk about it. Conservatives will make progress selling real reform in tax policy, education, and health care. Families will gain more control over their lives and feel less reliant on government. American appreciation of the importance of a free-market economy will strengthen. Is there a downside to this strategy?

Household Investment Accounts Soar



Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States.

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Flashback

TO KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN IS TO REMAIN EVER A CHILD—*Cicero*

The Ford Impeachment

On April 15, 1970, House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford coined a lasting truism when he told his colleagues and a packed press gallery that "an impeachable offense is whatever a majority of the House of Representatives considers [it] to be at a given moment in history."

Ford was proposing that the House appoint a select committee to investigate whether grounds existed for the Great-1970s-Impeachment-Trial-That-Wasn't: that of the seemingly eternal Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

Historians have penalized Ford several demerits for going after Douglas. For his part, the President maintains that his action was "politically ill advised, but it was not irresponsible."

The case against Douglas was not frivolous. A year earlier Justice Abe Fortas had resigned from the Supreme Court after it was revealed that while on the bench he had pocketed a $20,000 retainer from the foundation of jailed financier Louis Wolfson. Justice Douglas was moonlighting in the same crooked fields. Newspaper reports had established that over the years Douglas had received $101,000 from the foundation of Albert Parvin. Parvin was the former co-owner of the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas and a business associate of Meyer Lansky, "Ice Pick Willie" Alderman, and others not usually placed within the category of "nice Jewish boys."

"I can't for the life of me see what is the difference between what Fortas was doing and what Douglas did for a whole lot longer, except that Abe gave the money back when he got caught," Ford told aide Robert L. Hartmann.

(A weaker secondary charge against Douglas was that he had failed to recuse himself from a libel case involving publisher Ralph Ginzburg even though *Avant Garde*, a Ginzburg magazine, had paid the justice $350 for an article about folk-singing. Douglas protested he was unaware that Ginzburg owned *Avant Garde*.)

Ford's attack on Douglas was widely regarded as GOP payback for the Senate's rejection of Nixon Supreme Court nominees Haynsworth and Carswell, but longtime Ford lieutenant Hartmann insisted otherwise. In his memoir *Palace Politics*, Hartmann wrote, "Ford disapproved of Douglas the way a Grand Rapids housewife would deplore the behavior of certain movie stars." The conflict was "not so much liberal vs. conservative as swinger vs. square." With his four wives and a widely rumored sexual athleticism that belied his advanced years, Douglas's lechery made him a tempting target.

Luckily for Douglas, that diverted his pursuers from the Parvin trail. Minority Leader Ford fatally wounded his case by dwelling on the fact that *Evergreen*, a hybrid hippie-nudie magazine, had published an excerpt from a Douglas book. This was said to violate the "good behavior" requirement that the Constitution places upon judges. Yet Random House had sold *Evergreen* the reprint rights without Douglas's knowledge; moreover, the justice's article consisted largely of a sensible attack on the taxpayer-funded depredations of the Forest Service and "the powerful Highway Lobby."

The *Evergreen* charge was a disastrous red herring that allowed Ford's foes to paint him as a bluenose. It did, however, provide comic relief, in the improbable person of Ohio Democrat Wayne Hays (who soon would meet disgrace when his buxom employee Elizabeth Ray disclosed to the world that typing was not among her talents). Hays wryly—or should we say ryely, for it was cocktail hour—noted that Republicans were passing around the disputed issue of *Evergreen*, and he wondered if it was "available only to Republicans—or can some of us Democrats get it?" He brought down the House when he asked the rabid Representative Louis Wyman, "Has anybody read the article—or is everybody over there who has a magazine just looking at the pictures?"

Gerald Ford holds up a copy of *Evergreen*.

AP Photo/Charles Gorry

Justice Douglas's many admirers piled on Congressman Ford, who suffered the worst press of his career. How dare he impugn the integrity of one of the nine robed archons! Though Ford's resolution attracted 59 Republican and 52 Democratic co-sponsors, the Judiciary Committee conducted a desultory investigation, sweeping the disturbing Parvin connection under the rug. The lesson of the Ford-Douglas debate: An impeachable offense is indeed whatever the House of Representatives says it is.

The affair did have a postscript. On November 12, 1975, an enfeebled Justice William O. Douglas tendered his letter of resignation from the court to President Gerald R. Ford. The President thanked him for his "firm devotion to the fundamental rights of individual freedom and privacy."

—Bill Kauffman

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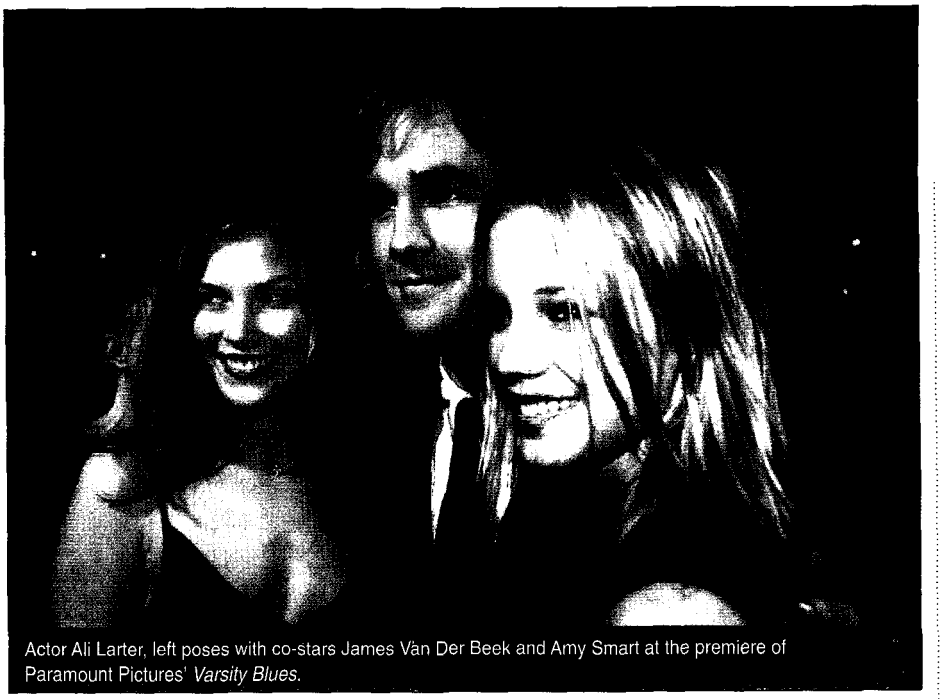
Mixed Messages for Generation Y



AP Photo/Chris Pizzello

Actor Ali Larter, left poses with co-stars James Van Der Beek and Amy Smart at the premiere of Paramount Pictures' *Varsity Blues*.

What was it like at the movies these past few months? A blast if you were a 14-year-old boy. Not since the early 1980s—the last time teen flicks ruled Hollywood's roost—has there been such a crop of high school comedies and hormone-driven dramas.

Teenagers have flocked to films such as *Varsity Blues* and *Cruel Intentions*. While these new pictures owe much to their cinematic predecessors of 15 years ago, they're of a different breed. These days, the titillation comes in a tidy moral package, as if producers were responding in a Clinton-like cop-out to recent demands for cleaner entertainment. "I know what I'm doing is wrong," a movie like *Cruel Intentions* seems to be reassuring us, "even though I continue to do it."

Teen movies weren't always this duplicitous; back in the '80s, they reveled in their ribald excesses with what can only be called honesty in comparison. In *Risky Business* (1983) a teenaged Tom Cruise befriended a hooker and turned his parents' house into a brothel. *Porky's*, a 1981 comedy propelled by its hero's quest to lose his virginity, was as brazen and unapologetic as the neon sign blazing over the strip club of the movie's title: "Get it at Porky's." *Sixteen Candles*, released in 1984, reaches its happy ending when Molly Ringwald's birthday girl gets her wish by finally rendezvousing with the school stud.

Teenagers seeking similar thrills at the movies today are getting a phony helping of morals on the side. The year's first box-office bang came courtesy of *Varsity Blues*, in which TV heartthrob James Van Der Beek's high school football star is pursued by whipped cream-wearing cheerleaders and strip club-dancing teachers when he starts chalking up wins for his small-town team. Because he's a "good" boy he doesn't touch, but the script lets him (and thus moviegoers) ogle the cheerleader and the teacher all they want.

Jawbreaker, a would-be black comedy about a clique of high school hotties who try to cover up the accidental murder of one of their friends, is even more dissembling. It pits Julie, an eager-to-confess good girl, against Courtney, the unrepentant leader of the group. The movie makes sure to include lascivious scenes of Courtney misbehaving (she has sex on her murdered friend's bed to make the death look like a rape) before Julie reveals her to be a killer in front of everyone at the prom. As Courtney tries to escape, her classmates hurl corsages at her in disgust. The scene unfolds in dramatic slow motion, so the audience can feel we too are pelting Courtney with flowers; that way, we get to watch her dirty deeds and still go home guilt-free.

There is also a false "responsibility" to *Cruel Intentions*, a laughable teen version of *Dangerous Liaisons*. The film follows teenage playboy Sebastian, who is inspired to curb his promiscuous ways by the love of a self-proclaimed virgin. Sebastian's reformation doesn't mean he'll wait with her, however, just that he'll sleep *only* with her—see how much he's changed!

Sebastian's stepsister Kathryn, meanwhile, played by Sarah Michelle Gellar, tries to "sleep with as many people as possible." Yet in today's movies, such action can only be lingered over visually, not entirely condoned; so Kathryn gets her comeuppance at the film's end. Her stepbrother is also punished for fooling around: He gets squashed by a car.

A handful of more laudable teen movies also came out in the last few months: the innocently derivative *She's All That*, the artfully wholesome *October Sky*, and above all, *Rushmore*, a sharp-tongued fairy tale about what it means to mature. But by and large, it's sexploitation hypocritically wrapped in morality that movie makers are using to lure kids into theaters these days.

—*Josh Larsen*

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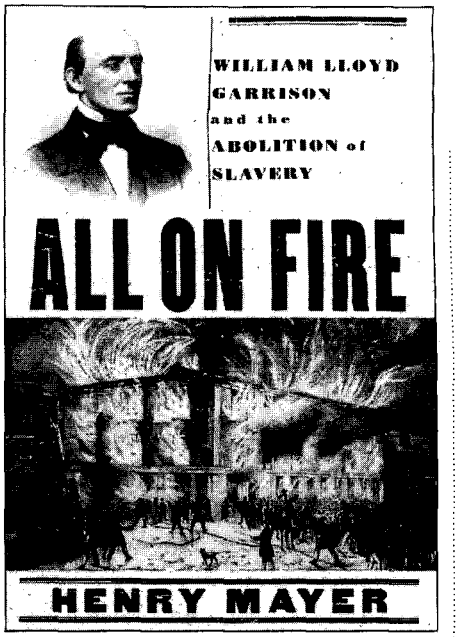
BookTalk



WILLIAM THE LIBERATOR

By Jeffrey Rogers Hummel

All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery
By Henry Mayer
St. Martin's Press, 707 pages, $32.50

No one attacked the black slavery of the South with greater vehemence than a group of young, radical abolitionists who burst upon the American landscape in the early 1830s. Exasperated by the betrayal of the Revolutionary promise that all forms of human bondage would disappear in this new land of liberty, and marshaling the evangelical fervor of the religious revivals then sweeping the country, they demanded nothing less than the immediate emancipation of all slaves. Not only did they oppose any compensation to slaveholders; they also demanded full political rights for all blacks, North and South.

The most influential and vitriolic of these abolitionists was William Lloyd Garrison. From Boston on January 1, 1831, the 25-year-old editor brought out the first issue of a new weekly paper, *The Liberator*. Garrison left no doubt about his refusal to compromise with the sin of slavery:

> I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen;—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD."

The pioneering editor, however, did not look to direct political action to eradicate slavery. Moral suasion and nonviolent resistance were his strategies. By early 1842 Garrison had gone so far as to denounce the U.S. Constitution for its pro-slavery clauses that made "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." He publicly burned a copy during one Fourth of July celebration, proclaiming, "So perish all compromises with tyranny!" He believed that, if anything, the North should secede from the central government. The slogan "No Union with Slave-Holders" was blazoned for years on the masthead of Garrison's newspaper.

The Liberator continued to appear every week without interruption—in the face of recurrent financial difficulties, antagonism from respectable leaders throughout the North, and even an enraged mob that almost lynched its editor—until the Thirteenth Amendment was enacted to abolish slavery, 35 years after the paper's founding.

Garrison has not been adequately served by historians. The all-too-common inclination has been to portray him as intolerant, a zealot whose activities were far less constructive than those of other more cautious, less conspicuous opponents of slavery. Biographers, when not openly hostile, have tended to patronize him with excessive psychologizing.

But at last, a biography has been published that is worthy of the man. Henry Mayer, author of *A Son of Thunder*, probably the best study of Patrick Henry, has outdone himself with his new book on Garrison. Rarely can one writer cover an intellectual's ideal and personal life with equal facility. But Mayer seamlessly integrates all dimensions of Garrison's life. Indeed, Mayer's eye for detail—from the drudgery of an apprentice printer, to the warm family life of a prominent agitator—makes this one of the most realistic, authentic biographies I have ever had the pleasure of reading. I finished it with a sense of knowing Garrison intimately, even though he inhabited an era when people had religious commitments so encompassing as to be utterly alien to our modern, secular culture.

The abolitionist movement went through schism after schism. Mayer presents a sensitive, insightful exposition of Garrison's advocacy of disunion, his denunciation of the Constitution, his opposition to voting and to political parties, his anarchism and pacifism, his early and hearty support for women's rights, and his disillusionment with and rejection of organized churches. In the end, Mayer makes a strong case that without the inflammatory but compelling writing, speaking, and organizing of Garrison, there may have been no effective abolitionist movement at all.

The biography possesses a few flaws. When discussing the views of other individuals, especially politicians, Mayer is sometimes unfair and occasionally in er-

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ror. For instance, contrary to what Mayer implies, the Liberty Party never argued that the central government could or should prohibit slavery within individual states. And when the prospect of finally ridding the country of human bondage during the Civil War seduced Garrison into compromising and supporting Lincoln and the Republican party, Mayer sympathizes with his subject too much.

But better a biography that is overly sympathetic than yet another harsh denunciation of Garrison the wild-eyed fanatic. Mayer's flaws are so trivial they hardly dim the luster of this inspiring work.

Jeffrey Rogers Hummel is the author of Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men: A History of the American Civil War.

THE WIT OF NATIONS

By David R. Henderson

Eat the Rich
By P. J. O'Rourke
Atlantic Monthly Press, 246 Pages, $24

Since 1776, when Adam Smith published *The Wealth of Nations*, countless volumes have been written by people who call themselves economists, but in those 200-plus years, no one has tried to write books about economics that are purposely funny. Finally, however, there is such a book. It is *Eat the Rich* (I guess that title beats *Steal This Book*) by P. J. O'Rourke, the humorist and columnist for *Rolling Stone*.

O'Rourke addresses the most important question in economics: "Why do some places prosper and thrive while others just suck?" Adam Smith dealt with that same question. So think of O'Rourke as a modern Adam Smith, with these two differences: O'Rourke's data are more recent, and you'll get side-splitting laughs on every page.

O'Rourke leads off by junking the notion that a brilliant mind is sufficient, or even necessary, to generate wealth. "No part of the earth (with the possible exception of Brentwood) is dumber than Beverly Hills," he says, "and the residents are wading in gravy. In Russia, meanwhile, where chess is a spectator sport, they're boiling stones for soup." Nor is education the answer. "Fourth graders in the American school system know what a condom is but aren't sure about 9 x 7."

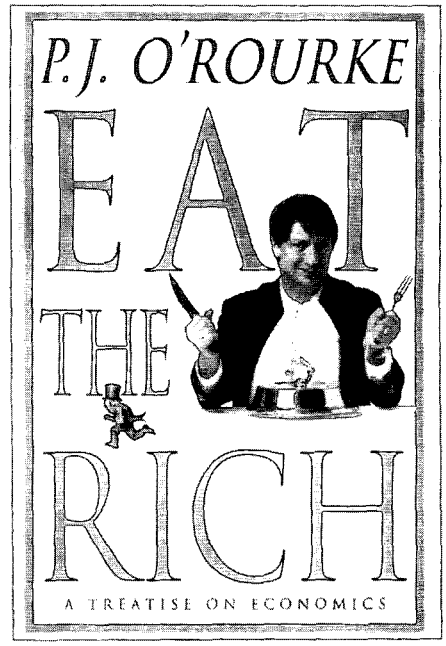
Why not figure out what makes economies rich by reading an economics textbook? O'Rourke lists a number of reasons, one of which is the prose style of the typical economics text: "puerile and impenetrable, *Goodnight Moon* rewritten by Henry James."

Style isn't O'Rourke's only objection to economics textbooks; he says the content is typically questionable, too. O'Rourke quotes famous MIT economist Paul Samuelson: "Marx was wrong about many things...but that does not diminish his stature as an important economist." Asks O'Rourke: "Well, what would? If Marx was wrong about many things and screwed the baby-sitter?"

Always, O'Rourke expresses economic ideas in humorous, understandable ways. Here he is on bond ratings. "A D-rated bond is like money lent to a younger brother. An AAA-rated bond is like money lent to a younger brother by the Gambino family."

To explain what kinds of economic systems work and what ones don't, he takes you on his travels—to Sweden, Cuba, Albania, Tanzania, Hong Kong, Russia, and Shanghai. O'Rourke notes that in Sweden, which practices "Good Socialism," workers get unlimited sick leave with no reduction in pay rate. He writes: "During a brief period of nonsocialist rule in 1991, a one-day waiting period for sick-leave benefits was instituted. An enormous drop in Monday and Friday worker illnesses resulted—one of the medical miracles of the twentieth century."

O'Rourke is less funny when he discusses Cuba ("Bad Socialism")—understandable, given that Cuba keeps a higher proportion of the population as political prisoners than any other country on earth. But even in discussing Cuba, O'Rourke launches some great lines. Pointing out that private restaurants are allowed so long as they employ only family members, O'Rourke writes: "It will be interesting to see how this model works



if it's applied to other free enterprise undertakings, such as airlines. Mom will begin beverage service as soon as Junior gets the landing gear up."

O'Rourke's ruminations on the Russian economy are dead-on funny. How about this for a succinct statement of the problems with Communism:

> If a shoe factory was told to produce 1,000 shoes, it produced 1,000 baby shoes, because these were the cheapest and easiest to make. If it was told to produce 1,000 men's shoes, it made them all in one size. If it was told to produce 1,000 shoes in a variety for men, women, and children, it produced 998 baby shoes, one pump, and one wing tip. If it was told to produce 3,000 pounds of shoes, it produced one enormous pair of concrete sneakers.

When the Russian government allowed people to bring back $2,000 in duty-free imports, Russians reacted. "Clothing, toys, and small appliances were packed into enormous burlap sacks so that the baggage-claim area of any Russian airport with international flights seemed to be populated by hundreds of Santa Clauses in their off-duty clothes." During O'Rourke's four-day trip on the famed Trans-Siberian Railroad across Russia, he sat on the south side of the train, with no fan, no ventilation, no

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window shade, and a window that didn't open. So he got relief by sticking his head out of a window in the corridor and letting his jaw hang open in the breeze. "I saw most of Siberia the way your dog sees I-95."

So what does cause economic growth? O'Rourke reaches pretty much the same conclusions Adam Smith reached, namely that clearly enforced property rights, free markets, free trade, and small government create wealth. What keeps people poor, writes O'Rourke, are large governments doing too much, and almost all of it badly.

In a passage unusual for its serious passion, O'Rourke writes, "Poverty is hard, wretched, and humiliating. Poverty is schoolgirl prostitutes trying to feed their parents in Cuba.... But what poverty is not is sad. Poverty is infuriating."

David R. Henderson, an adjunct scholar with the American Enterprise Institute, is a research fellow with the Hoover Institution.

PORTRAIT OF A MARRIAGE

By Norah Vincent

Elegy For Iris
By John Bayley
St. Martin's Press, 294 pages, $22.95

The late Iris Murdoch's dementia was one of those diabolical cosmic jokes, on the order of Milton's going blind or Beethoven's growing deaf. You wonder why it couldn't have happened to a writer like Russell Baker or Joyce Carol Oates. Moreover, you wonder why it had to burden Murdoch's delightful, devoted husband John Bayley. For, as this fond memoir about his life and love with Iris so achingly shows, Bayley is the one who felt the loss of her faculties most keenly.

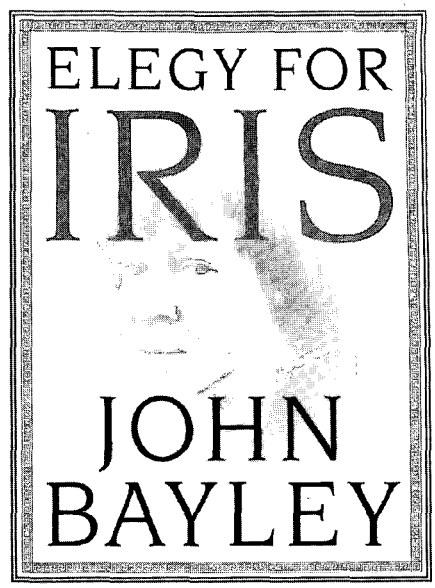
But Bayley's story is not really sad. There are painful moments, as when the deteriorated Iris seems to say something stunningly coherent, even poetic, and then slips back into babbling, but they are far outnumbered by insights and touching remembrances. It is almost as though Bayley is writing a portrait of a marriage, and Iris's Alzheimer's is merely the occasion for doing so, the impetus for finally putting pen to paper. Though loss is a painful muse, for Bayley it is an expeditious one that has allowed him to write about much more than his grief at being forced to watch the first-class mind of the woman he loves regress into childhood.

He and Iris shared a deep bond, yet there is never the feeling, present in many tragic love stories, that the two lovers have merged or lost their identities to each other. On the contrary, Bayley describes their union as a process of "moving closer and closer apart." He means this in the best possible way:

> So married life began. And the joys of solitude. No contradiction was involved. The one went perfectly with the other. To feel oneself held and cherished and accompanied, and yet to be alone. To be closely and physically entwined, and yet feel solitude's friendly presence, as warm and undesolating as contiguity itself.

Even more than the rarity of their relationship, intellectual modesty is what distinguished both Bayley and Murdoch in the world of letters, and this is what makes Bayley's portrayal of that world so pleasing to read. Most of Bayley's criticisms of literary snobs take the form of gentle ribbing. Now and then Bayley does strike a direct (but not vindictive) hit that exposes some rot in the literary world. These flaws often contrast starkly against Murdoch's writerly equanimity. "Among writers, it is the lofty moralists, the politically and socially correct, that usually turn out in their private lives to be as pushy as Proust's Madame Verdurin," Bayley observes, noting, "Iris had no need for consciousness of herself as an author.... She went on then secretly, quietly doing her work, never wishing to talk about it, never needing to compare or discuss or contrast, never reading reviews or wanting to hear about them...."

How refreshing it is not to see husband and wife quarreling in print, and,



these days, how unusual. If Claire Bloom had come down with Alzheimer's, Philip Roth would have named his new novel *I Married a Moron*. If the Prince of Wales had gone to pulp, Diana would have claimed it was just another form of royal abuse. But there is something truly elite about Bayley, elite in the old-fashioned sense; that is, not elitist in the least. It's something that most Americans, hyperdemocratic poseurs that we are, can only ineptly parody. It's called class.

He does, however, tell some very personal things about Murdoch, who was an almost pathologically private person: that she had several love affairs, for example, and that in her enfeebled state, she could not bathe herself and spent a good portion of her time watching children's shows like the Teletubbies. Bayley touches only lightly on these subjects, however, without providing the kind of belabored detail that would embarrass Murdoch unduly. It seems only fair that Bayley be allowed to write his experience, even if that experience includes a corner of Murdoch's privacy. If anything, Bayley is harder on himself than on his wife. He judges himself harshly for losing his temper when confronted by Murdoch's worst bouts of nonsense. On the whole, any feelings of resentment come across very gently. The pain or disgruntlement

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seems entirely outweighed by reverence, compassion, and tenderness.

Elegy for Iris is, more than anything else, what the title says: a tribute.

Norah Vincent, who lives in New York City, is coauthor of The Instant Intellectual.

I, THE JURY

By David Kopel

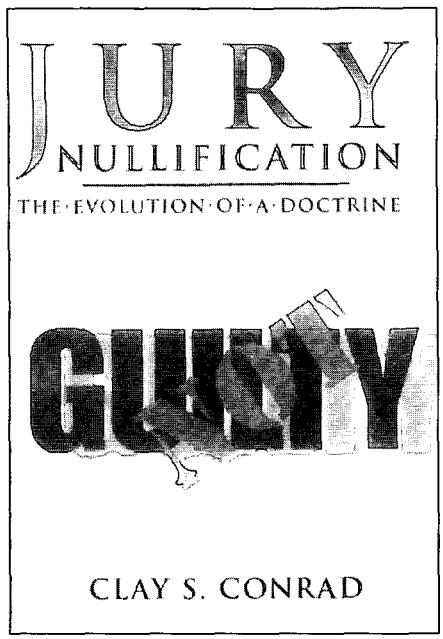
Jury Nullification: The Evolution of a Doctrine
By Clay S. Conrad
Cato Institute/Carolina Academic Press, 335 pages, $22.50

In a criminal trial, may the jury consider whether it is fair that the particular defendant be punished? Or are juries required only to decide whether the defendant broke the law, and to avoid questions of whether the law is just or the defendant's actions were justified by circumstances?

According to a poll by the *National Law Journal*, 76 percent of Americans believe juries have the right to bring their conscience into the jury room—and to acquit a defendant who is technically guilty but morally innocent. Writers like the *Washington Post*'s Joan Biskupic are striking back at this idea by claiming that a juror's right to vote his conscience is tantamount to "vigilantism" or "anarchy."

Given all the confusion about juror rights, Clay S. Conrad's superb new book *Jury Nullification: The Evolution of a Doctrine* is especially timely. Tracing the jury-rights controversy from medieval England to modern America, Conrad shows that independence of the jury has always been one of the most important safeguards of civil liberty.

Many famous early cases of jury independence involved freedom of the press, and arose when the British government, either in England or in the colonies, prosecuted newspaper publishers such as John Peter Zenger or religious dissidents such as William Penn. Although Zenger and Penn were in fact guilty of the crimes they were accused of

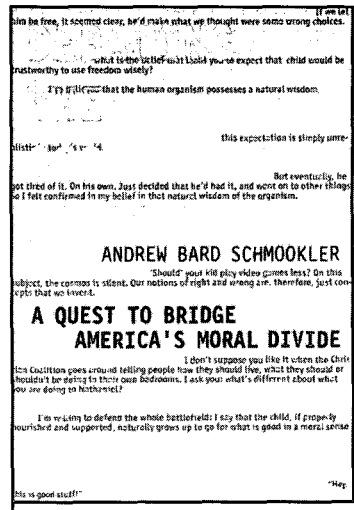


(Zenger had criticized the New York governor in print, and Penn had published illegal religious tracts), juries voted to acquit them.

In the early American Republic, the jury's right to acquit a technically guilty defendant was widely acknowledged by the Founders, including Supreme Court Chief Justice John Jay. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, though at opposite poles on many issues, were of one mind on the need for jury independence.

The most important exercises of jury independence in the eighteenth century focused on free speech. The middle of the nineteenth century witnessed frequent acquittals of individuals who had helped runaway slaves, in violation of the Fugitive Slave Act. In the 1920s, juries helped speed the repeal of Prohibition by refusing to convict those whose crime was selling beer or fermenting wine.

But while early American courts were receptive to the idea, later courts grew hostile to jury independence. In the 1895 case *Sparf v. Hanson*, a divided Supreme Court held that although jurors possess absolute power to acquit whenever they want, federal judges are not required to inform them of that right. In Maryland, Indiana, and Texas, where state constitutions explicitly guarantee the jurors' right to judge the law, judicial constructions have, in effect, nullified this right—or at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least nullified the right of juries to be informed about such rights.

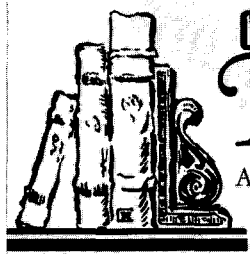
Conrad refutes various criticisms of jury independence. He argues that jurors who vote their conscience are not "nullifying" the law. Rather, they are exercising their discretion, ruling that it would not be fair to apply a particular law in a particular case. District attorneys constantly exercise similar discretion—not bringing charges in the first place—and no one accuses them of "nullification" or "anarchy."

The claim that racist juries in the South used to acquit criminals who attacked blacks has some basis in fact, but acquittals in cases where the district attorney really tried to win a conviction were rare. In some places today there appears to be an inverse pattern of black juries refusing to convict black defendants. The proper remedy for such cases, Conrad suggests, is ensuring that people are not excluded from jury service on the basis of race.

Although most judges today don't tell juries their rights, more and more jurors appear to be following their personal judgment. Nationally, about 20 percent of criminal prosecutions result in a hung jury, compared to only about 5 percent in earlier decades. In response, some opponents are calling for allowing more non-unanimous jury verdicts. Advocates of jury independence rejoin that laws which inspire jury revolts should be repealed.

Jury independence has become more relevant today than in any other period since the 1920's. And not since Lysander Spooner's 1852 classic *Trial by Jury* has such a substantive book about jury independence appeared as Clay Conrad's. It is a definitive guide for citizens who want to bring their consciences to jury service.

David Kopel, co-author of No More Wacos, *is research director at Colorado's Independence Institute.*



off The Shelf

A REGULAR REVIEW OF CLASSIC, OVER-LOOKED, NEWLY RELEVANT, OR OTHERWISE DESERVING OLDER BOOKS

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

By Brian Doherty

Dear America
By Karl Hess, 1975

Karl Hess's life was a quintessential modern American journey. He was reared mostly by his mother in Washington, D.C., in the 1930s. She had left his father because of his relentless tomcatting. Family legend had his hot-blooded father, Carl Hess, beheaded by a Japanese soldier during their occupation of the Philippines because he refused an order to interrupt a card game. Though Karl—who changed the spelling of his name from "Carl" to seem less his father's son—credited his mother for how he turned out, a strong streak of Dad's romantic windmill-tilting was in his blood.

Dear America was published in 1975, during one of Hess's many ideological turnings. On its first page this former GOP platform drafter, Goldwater speechwriter, and (later) editor of the Libertarian party's newspaper wrote that "corporate capitalism is...the Grand Larceny of our particular time in history."

Yes, Hess was a peculiar sort of ideologue. He was fired from one newspaper job for refusing to write a laudatory obituary for FDR because "I regarded his regime as social fascism then and I still do." In the '50s he became a journalist at *Newsweek*. A serious anti-Communist, Hess helped run guns to (non-Castro) enemies of Battista who he thought would be better for American interests. He also met with Frank Costello's lawyer in hopes of convincing the Mob to patriotically hijack shipments of Soviet cash headed to American Communists.

By the end of the '60s, the former Goldwaterite was hobnobbing with Black Panthers, and raging about the revolution that was going to hit middle-class America. According to *Dear America*, which is part memoir and part call for social revolution, Hess grew bored, bought a motorcycle, began hanging out at the leftist Institute for Policy Studies, doing welding for a living, and discovering pot. Hess and his hippie honey lived on houseboats and let it all hang out.

Hess's eclecticism resulted from his mistrust of ideology. Experience, inherently local, was his lodestar. In the mid-1970s he tried to turn his D.C. neighborhood of Adams-Morgan into a functioning experiment in local technological and agricultural self-sufficiency. A few hydroponic gardens sprouted on roof tops; machine shops were opened to neighborhood kids. Trout were fed in tanks in rowhouse basements. (The full story is told in a later Hess book, *Community Technology*.)

Hess appears in *Dear America* in all his dogged contrariness. He was libertarian enough to finger the withholding tax as the beam supporting the weight of the American Leviathan, and to declare that it must be first to go. He was lefty enough to call for takeovers of absentee-owned factories or housing. He was crazy enough to stop paying taxes, and to announce this, with his reasons, to the IRS. This decision caused Hess no end of bedevilment, leaving him unable to earn any legal income because of a 100 percent IRS lien. He regretted his stance, but only because of the troubles it caused for his wife and family.

After *Dear America*, Hess retreated with his second wife, Therese, to a home they built in West Virginia. Asked what it took to be the perfect anarchist, Hess replied being a good friend, a good lover, and a good neighbor, and *Dear America* is dedicated "To My Neighbors."

Upon his death in 1994, Hess's West Virginia friends gathered to remember him fondly, suggesting that though Goldwater lost and libertarian anarchism has not descended upon the land, Karl Hess won.

Brian Doherty is the Warren Brookes Fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

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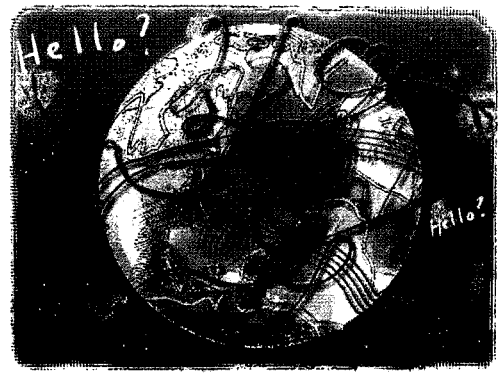

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

POLITICS

Mistreating Treaties

Jeremy Rabkin, The New Sovereignty, *AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

From the start, the U.S. government has been suspicious of international covenants. In the *Federalist,* John Jay argued that treaties would be rare and would only deal with "war, peace, and commerce." Skepticism over the powers of international organizations kept the U.S. out of the League of Nations and the World Court after World War I. In the 1950s, the Senate barely defeated a constitutional amendment that would have prohibited the U.S. from signing international treaties unless Congress passed legislation writing the treaties' provisions into American law.

Today, argues Jeremy Rabkin of Cornell University, international treaties are more dangerous than ever, but official U.S. resistance to them is weakening. Treaties needing Senate approval have increasingly been superseded by executive agreements the President signs by himself. Between 1790 and 1890, the Senate approved 277 treaties while Presidents signed 265 executive agreements. In contrast, from 1980-92, the Senate ratified 216 treaties, while Presidents approved 4,510 executive agreements. Thus, much international law now applies to Americans without its being ratified by the Senate, as required by our Constitution.

And instead of ending wars or advancing free trade, international agreements have increasingly become "soft law"—noble-sounding documents that mandate "an array of feminist or liberal policy preferences" across national boundaries. The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1980), for example, requires its signatory states to provide government-subsidized day care for all working mothers. The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) prohibits parents from interfering with a child's choice of reading matter and guarantees children an unrestricted right to freedom of association.

Even seemingly innocuous covenants have consequences. In 1972 the U.S. signed the World Heritage Convention, designed to create a registry of parks and monuments. In 1995, environmentalists opposed to the creation of a mine near Yellowstone National Park invited members of the U.N. World Heritage Committee to come to Montana and rule against the mine. American officials could offer no reason why Thai, German, Chinese, and French international bureaucrats should not intervene in a western land dispute. (One year later, the committee placed Yellowstone on its list of sites "in danger.")

Even when an international covenant isn't signed, its provisions can become U.S. law, as courts overturn domestic laws that conflict with "customary" international doctrine. In this way, U.S. courts could mandate laws ensuring homosexual rights, which are guaranteed under the U.N. Human Rights Convention. They could cite as precedent a 1992 case where Australia was condemned as an international human rights violator because the state of Tasmania prohibited sodomy. Only when Tasmania repealed its anti-sodomy law were the international sanctions removed.

Rabkin concludes that Congress should insist that international law return to its traditional functions—ending wars and regulating the flow of goods across frontiers. Senators should be very skeptical of any treaty that forces the U.S. into "the sort of open-ended or improper international commitment which strains the logic of the Constitution."

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

The FCC: Enemy of the Future

Thomas W. Hazlett, "Assigning Property Rights to Radio Spectrum Users: Why Did FCC License Auctions Take 67 Years?" in The Journal of Law and Economics *(October 1998), University of Chicago Press, 7720 South Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.*

In 1994, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) held its first auction of a portion of the broadcast spectrum, ending a 67-year period of free broadcast licenses. From 1994-98, the FCC held 15 auctions that raised $21 billion for the Treasury and made satellite dishes and cellular phones commonplace.

The FCC could have held broadcast auctions decades ago. The techniques for holding such auctions were first described in 1959 by economist (and future Nobel laureate) Ronald Coase. Why did the FCC take so long to change? Hazlett of the American Enterprise Insti-

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tute blames the cozy relations between the FCC and broadcasters.

When telecommunications regulation became codified in the Communications Act of 1934, the federal government decided to give radio and television broadcasters free licenses in return for broadcasters' operating in the "public interest." The result was "regulation by raised eyebrow," in which the government's reward for the free license was a captive audience of broadcasters eager to please regulators and to produce local news shows whose coverage favored political incumbents. As former FCC general counsel Henry Geller has observed, FCC regulation of broadcasting is "a charade—a wrestling match full of fake grunts and groans but signifying nothing."

In 1981, the FCC, having delayed introduction of cellular phones for a decade to determine how these phones should be regulated, ended up giving the licenses away in lotteries after a Democratic Congress refused permit auctions. The result was the creation of vast fortunes for the 1,400 firms lucky enough to obtain licenses, and vast waste created by the 400,000 rejected firms who spent $1 billion on failed applications.

Only in 1993 did President Clinton persuade a Democratic Congress to allow broadcast auctions, and Congress still requires that existing holders of free licenses be allowed to retain them in the coming digital television age, which will fit about six TV channels into the space currently occupied by one.

Hazlett argues that the "public interest" regulations imposed by Congress on broadcasters receiving digital TV licenses (such as more children's programming, free time for candidates, and television ratings for all shows), aren't worth the $70 billion the government lost by letting broadcasters have free digital licenses. "The use of zero-priced awards" in broadcasting "sacrificed billions of dollars that could have been made available for federal spending, deficit reduction, and/or tax relief," he says.

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How Unions Keep Workers Unemployed

Edward Bierhanzl and James Gwartney, "Regulations, Unions, and Labor Markets," in Regulation *(Summer 1998), Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.*

America continues to lead the world in job creation, while Japan and Europe continue to stagnate. From 1980-96, the 15 countries of the European Union increased their employment by 1.7 percent, while U.S. employment rose 26.8 percent.

What accounts for the difference? Edward Bierhanzl of Florida A & M and James Gwartney of Florida State believe unions play a crucial role. Analyzing data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), they find a strong correlation between rising unemployment and unionism.

Most Western European countries and Australia have centralized bargaining for wages, where the confederation of unions meets with the employers' confederation to set wage rates. Only 9 percent of French workers belong to unions, but centralized bargaining ensures that 91 percent of French labor has its wages fixed by unions. By setting wages artificially, these wage boards create inflexibility and rising unemployment among the marginally skilled.

In Italy, for instance, highly skilled workers tend to live in the north, while less skilled workers live in the south. Since wage boards mandate that Italian corporations pay northerners and southerners equal rates, factories tend to congregate in the north, leaving southern Italy with unemployment rates as high as 30 percent.

National labor laws also play a part. In Italy, Portugal, France, Spain, Greece, and the Netherlands, firms must receive approval from the government before they can close or relocate a plant. Because they cannot easily fire workers, firms often choose not to hire them. Particularly vulnerable are 15- to 24-year-old workers starting their careers, since employers who are forced to keep their existing employees aren't willing to take chances on unproven workers who will have to be retained even if they prove unproductive.

By contrast, the two OECD members who liberalized their labor markets in the past 20 years are among the more prosperous. The Employment Act of 1980 abolished the closed shop in Great Britain and helped ensure that British union membership fell from 50 percent of the labor force in 1980 to 34 percent by 1995. The result: The British unemployment rate in February 1998 was 6.4 percent, the lowest in 25 years. New Zealand abolished centralized labor bargaining in 1991 and allowed workers to negotiate their wages without union assistance if they chose. Union representation in New Zealand fell by 36 percent from 1990-95, and unemployment fell by over 40 percent from 1992-96.

"Policymakers in Europe and other places with highly regulated labor markets," Bierhanzl and Gwartney conclude, "should understand that the road to lower unemployment is market liberalization."

Kill the Death Tax

Dan Miller, The Economics of the Estate Tax, *Joint Economic Committee, G-01 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.*

Most taxes drag on our economy, and especially onerous is the estate tax, imposed by the federal government on estates worth over $625,000. At death, a person's lifetime of saving (which has already been taxed as it was earned) is then hit with punitive tax rates of up to 60 percent. Dan Miller, a Joint Economic Committee economist, quotes a liberal law professor who argues that the estate tax punishes not sin but virtue: "It is a tax on work and savings without consumption, on thrift, on long-term savings."

Estate-tax supporters make several fallacious arguments in its defense:

It reduces income inequality. Actually, most wealthy Americans got that way through work, not inheritances. Alan Blinder, a Clinton appointee to the Federal Reserve Board, estimates that only 2 percent of wealthy Americans inherited their riches, so "radical reform of inheritance

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policies can accomplish relatively little income redistribution." Blinder's findings are reinforced by a 1997 survey of wealthy investors which found that only 7 percent of the investors lived on inherited wealth.

It encourages philanthropy. Although it's true some estates are given to charity in order to avoid the estate tax, the IRS estimates 82 percent of the estates subject to death duties from 1992-95 did not take charitable deductions. And when estate tax rates were *cut* from 70 percent to 55 percent in 1981, donations to nonprofits *rose* significantly in following years.

It boosts government revenue. In fact, the estate tax provides just over a paltry 1 percent of all federal taxes, and wealthy people can avoid the tax by donating all their estates during their lifetimes. Joseph Stiglitz, chairman of the Council on Economic Advisers during the first Clinton administration, has admitted that "prohibitively high inheritance tax rates generate no revenue; they simply force the individual to consume his income during his lifetime."

"The estate tax generates costs to taxpayers, the economy, and the environment that far exceed any potential benefits that it might arguably produce," Miller concludes.

SOCIETY

Make War Against Sex Predators

Matthew Daniels and Dan Englund, Statutory Rape: When Adults Prey Sexually upon Children. *Massachusetts Family Institute, 381 Elliott Street, Newton Upper Falls, Massachusetts 02464.*

Find a household with a teenage single mother and an absent father and you're likely to find a case of statutory rape. Courts have been lenient against men who exploit women below the age of consent. Matthew Daniels and Dan Englund of the Massachusetts Family Institute suggest it's time to crack down.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports about two-thirds of teenage mothers in America had their children fathered by adult males. The most extensive state data, presented by researchers at the University of

California, Irvine, found that girls who gave birth while in high school had partners 4.2 years older, on average, while junior high school mothers typically had partners 6.7 years older.

Some states are launching offensives against statutory rapists. California now spends over $8 million annually on a new program that funds improved prosecution of the crime. The Florida legislature tightened its age of consent law and now prosecutes the most egregious statutory rapists under its felony child abuse laws. Delaware and Connecticut have also made their statutory rape laws more strict.

Daniels and Englund urge more states to raise the age of consent from 16 to 18, impose mandatory minimum sentences of one year for the first offense and five years for the second, and treat cases where men are over 21 and women under 16 as child abuse cases. "Adults," they write, "must be forcefully warned that they will be prosecuted for these crimes, incarcerated, and identified as sex offenders."

School Choice Helps Public Schools

Nina Shokraii Rees, "Public School Benefits of Private School Vouchers," in Policy Review *(January/February 1999), Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.*

Recent research has demonstrated that voucher programs clearly improve student achievement among students who transfer to private schools. But even public school performance is helped when vouchers arrive, forcing school competition, reports Nina Rees of the Heritage Foundation. "When public schools are faced with the possibility of large student transfers, and a corresponding loss of funding, they have shown a willingness to make improvements in how and what they teach," she summarizes.

This explains why some long-time foes of school choice are beginning to change their minds. For years Milwaukee's school board fiercely resisted the city's pioneer voucher program, but this past September it unanimously signed a fundraising letter for Milwaukee's private scholarship program. In Houston, after voters rejected a $390 million school-construction bond drive in 1996, school superintendent Rod Paige suggested students from 65 overcrowded public schools be given scholarships for private schools. Paige's suggestion was endorsed by the school board (though students have yet to receive scholarships).

Harvard economist Caroline Hoxby has studied urban school districts according to the degree of parental choice available. All other factors equal, test scores were 3 percent higher in areas where parents had some choice among public schools. In areas where parental choice included easy transfers between public and private schools, students who switched to a private school saw their chances of college acceptance rise by 12 percent. Even more interestingly, in those same high-choice areas, even students who remained in public schools saw their test scores rise by 8 percent over comparable public school students who lived in areas with no choices.

"So far, the evidence suggests that, when tried, school choice improves the overall quality of education for public and private schools alike," concludes Rees.

SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Flood Insurance Washout

Higher Ground: A Report on Voluntary Property Buyouts in the Nation's Floodplains. *National Wildlife Federation, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, Virginia 22184.*

Whenever there's a major flood, the federal government usually spends

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billions of dollars paying property owners whose homes and offices have been destroyed. The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), reports that eight federal agencies—the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Interior, Education, and Transportation, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Farmers Home Administration—spend $7 billion annually responding to floods.

Federal flood insurance programs contribute to this high cost. "The availability of federally sponsored flood insurance and the expectation of an entitlement if disaster occurs," writes the NWF, "encourage floodplain development and repeated rebuilding in high-risk areas."

When Congress created the National Flood Insurance Program in 1968, it deliberately set artificially low premiums. For a coastal home on an Atlantic or a Great Lakes waterfront, the federal government charges $450-$900 for property insurance that would cost $10,000 to $18,000 in the private market. And until 1994, federal flood insurance policies came into effect five days after they were issued, ensuring policy holders would put off buying the insurance until very rainy days. (In 1994, the waiting period was extended to 30 days.) Even with such low premiums, only 30 percent of vulnerable homes carry any type of flood insurance, and all homeowners expect federal bailouts if disaster strikes.

From 1995-98, the Federal Insurance Administration received $810 million in Treasury subsidies to pay flood insurance claims. A few homeownerss managed to reap massive sums under this program. Examining data from 1978-95, the NWF found that about 2 percent of the homes with federally subsidized flood insurance were "repetitive loss structures" that received more than one payment. This 2 percent received 40 percent ($2.6 billion) of all federal flood insurance payouts. About 10 percent of these homes, most located in Houston or New Orleans, received $416 million in multiple payments, more than the entire value of the houses. One Houston home valued at $114,500, for example, received $804,000 in 16 different flood insurance claims.

A few businesses, most located in northeastern New Jersey, have been even more successful at collecting flood insurance money. Five New Jersey businesses received more than 22 flood insurance payments. One enterprise in Kearny, New Jersey, received 34 flood insurance checks totalling $3.6 million between 1978-89, with the funds arriving every four months on average.

A better system, the NWF argues, would provide one-time payments to homeowners who voluntarily leave the floodplain. Such arrangements were instituted in the Midwest after the 1993 floods, and floodplains became open spaces. The new programs save taxpayer money, since no repetitive loss payments need to be made. Because of Missouri's open space program, for instance, only 3,700 households needed flood assistance in the 1995 floods, compared to 37,000 Missourians in the equally severe 1993 overflows.

"Buyouts can help bring the spiraling cost of disaster relief under control," the NWF writes. "Perhaps most importantly, they can restore people to safe living conditions while reviving environmental benefits."

A Faster Road to Mars

John Tierney, "Martian Chronicle," in Reason *(February 1999), 3415 South Sepulveda Boulevard #400, Los Angeles, California 90034.*

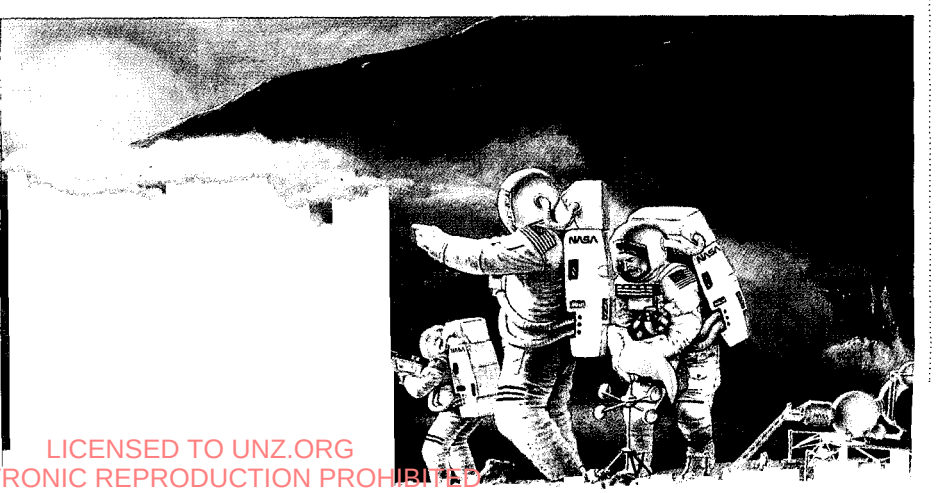
A long-term goal of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is a manned expedition to Mars, currently scheduled for 2010 at a cost of $55 billion. *New York Times* columnist John Tierney says history suggests many ways to encourage entrepreneurs to fund a speedier Mars mission:

Create a prize. Prizes spurred Spanish and Portuguese adventurers in the fifteenth century to send ships across the Atlantic, and rewarded nineteenth-century explorers who sought the North Pole and the unknown atolls of the South Pacific. More recent prize winners include the *Gossamer Albatross* aircraft, which won $200,000 in 1978 for the first human-powered flight. The X Prize Foundation is currently offering a $10 million reward "for the first manned, completely reusable spaceship."

Find patrons. When Robert Peary launched his North Pole expedition in 1909, his backers were the Peary Arctic Club, wealthy men whose investment was rewarded by having geologic features named after them. Today's billionaires may also be willing to pay to have the Mars mission christen Mount Gates or the Buffett Plateau.

Hold a lottery. This would be similar to the International Red Cross Lottery, which raises tens of millions annually for humanitarian causes. Millions of people may purchase a Mars lottery ticket if they could win a chance to travel in the first Mars expedition. The lottery could also reward 200 finalists with a trip to an Arctic training camp, so that those not chosen could console themselves with an alternate adventure.

Sell the media rights. Henry Morton Stanley's African expeditions were paid for by the *New York Herald*. Given the massive sums TV networks pay for the Olympics and other sporting events, giant media corporations might be eager to invest billions of dollars in return for exclusive television rights to a Mars expedition. And just as Ernest Shackleton exploited the new media of his day



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by bringing back some of the first movies from the Antarctic, so too can a Mars expedition sell rights to Web sites or other information sources.

OTHER COUNTRIES

Will Japan Recover?

Peter Hartcher, "Can Japan Come Back?" in The National Interest *(Winter 1998-99), 1112 16th Street N.W. #540, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

World War II cost Japan about $140 billion in today's dollars. The collapse of the Japanese "bubble economy" from 1990-95, on the other hand, reduced Japanese wealth by $6 trillion.

Why has Japan declined? Peter Hartcher, an editor of the *Australian Financial Review,* says the answer lies in the history of Japanese banking.

After the devastation of World War II, Japan's banks made it difficult to borrow, forcing Japanese salarymen to save heavily to buy homes or pay school tuition. Punitive exchange controls ensured Japanese savings stayed at home. This capital was then used by Japanese corporations to improve plants or hire more workers. "In this way," Hartcher writes, "savings created investment, and investment created more savings."

In the end, Japan created more capital than it could use. From 1986-90, Japanese savers deposited funds equal to 19.2 percent of Japanese GNP, but corporations only used 16.4 percent for internal investment. The remaining 2.8 percent of GNP—$345 billion over five years, or the equivalent of the Swiss economy—was sent overseas to buy high-priced American real estate and other dubious investments.

Japanese banks in this era were desperate to find new borrowers, and thus made questionable loans. Many of these loans are now subject to bank fraud prosecutions. Because exchange controls were finally lifted in April 1998, a steady and decentralized flow of capital is now departing Japan (after three months, $6 billion had left Japan). Large banks are beginning to break up and fail, and it's likely big companies like Toyota may set up their own financial institutions, further spurring competition.

Experts remain unsure when the Japanese economic contraction will end. The country's Ministry of International Trade and Industry predicts a maximum Japanese growth rate of 1.8 percent from now until 2010—"and that," Hartcher writes, "is one of the more optimistic assessments." But whatever Japan's economic future, it's clear the economic colossus of the 1980s had feet of clay. Hartcher invokes a 1993 Finance Ministry study which concluded "that Japan's Bubble Economy of the 1980s could be classed with the Dutch Tulip craze, the South Sea Bubble, and the Roaring Twenties boom in the United States as one of history's great episodes of speculative madness."

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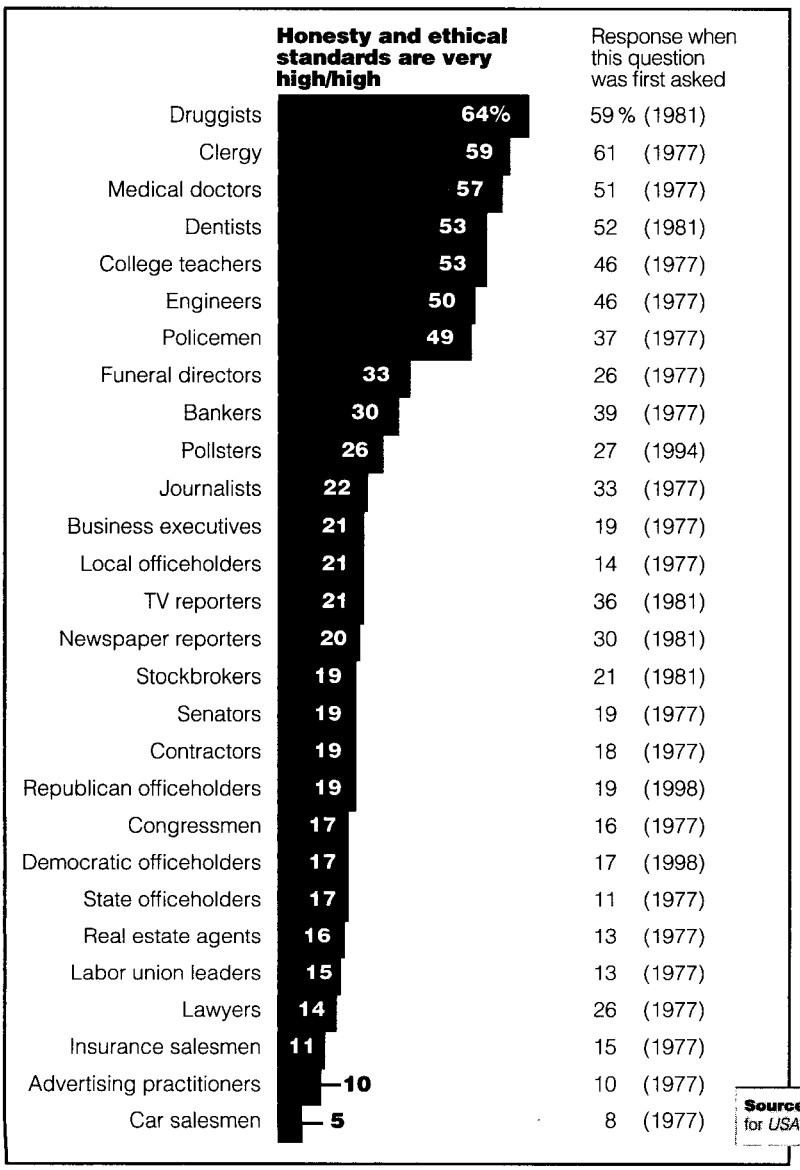
Opinion Pulse

EDITED BY KARLYN BOWMAN

LIARS

Elected officials don't fare well in terms of their honesty and ethical standards. Similar proportions in 1943 and in 1997 agreed that it's almost impossible for people in politics to remain honest. Starting, it appears, with questions about Edward Kennedy's truthfulness about Chappaquidick, pollsters have inquired about the honesty of virtually every major political figure and many minor ones. Skepticism of politicians' veracity may have caused 58 percent in 1976 to "worry some about a politician who says 'I'll never lie to you,'" a claim Jimmy Carter made.

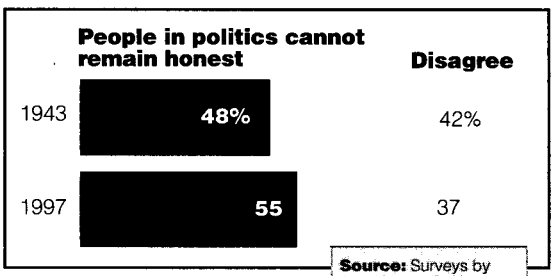
Question: Please tell me how you would rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields...?



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization for *USA Today* and CNN, October 1998.

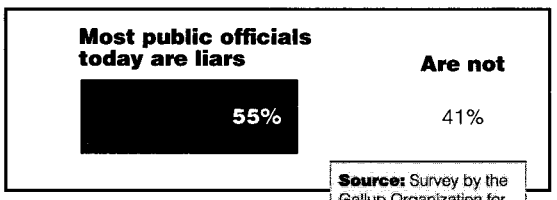
Question: It has been said that it is almost impossible for a man to stay honest if he goes into politics. Do you...? (1943)

Question: Would you agree or disagree...? (1997)



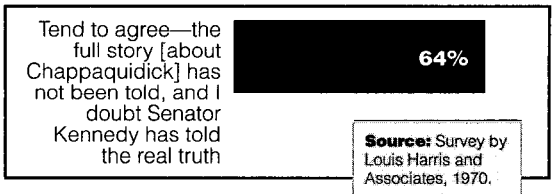
Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, 1943 and Opinion Dynamics for Fox News, 1997.

Question: Do you personally think...?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *USA Today* and CNN, February 1999.

Question: Now let me read you some explanations that have been made about Senator Kennedy, the accident, and his explanation. For each, tell me if you...?



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, 1970.

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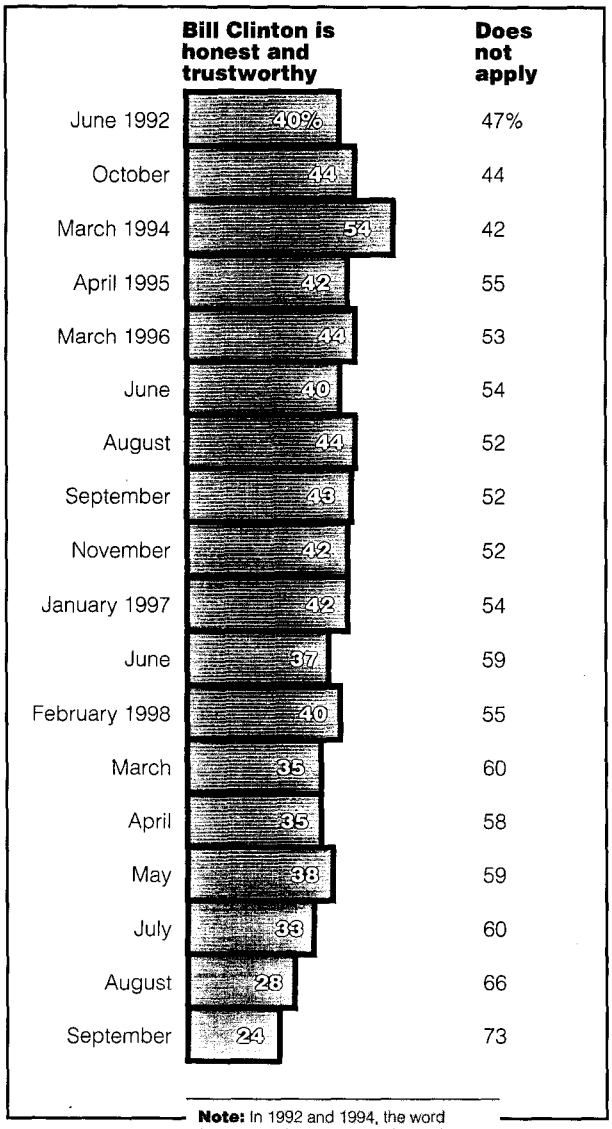
Bill Clinton's Honesty

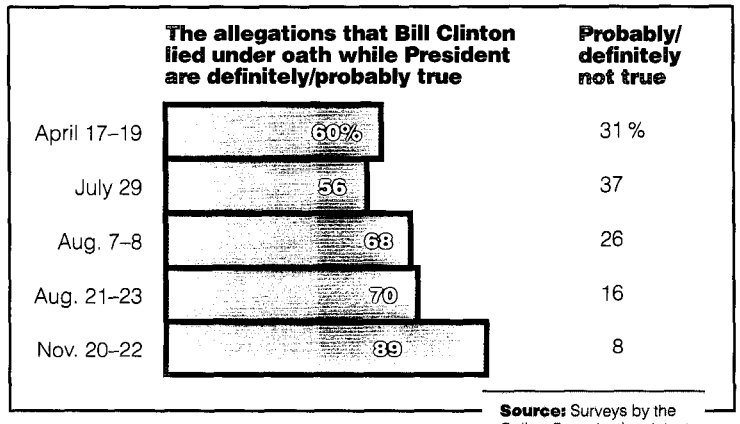
The proportion believing that Bill Clinton is honest and trustworthy has plummeted since 1992. Today only a quarter say these adjectives apply to him. In early spring 1998, majorities told Gallup that the allegations that he lied about having an affair were definitely or probably true. By November, 89 percent said he had lied under oath while President. A bare majority said it was understandable that he would lie under oath about sexual conduct. Roughly four in ten say Clinton lies more than the average American. A third believe he lies more than the average politician.

I'm going to read you some statements. After each please tell me whether or not each applies to Clinton...



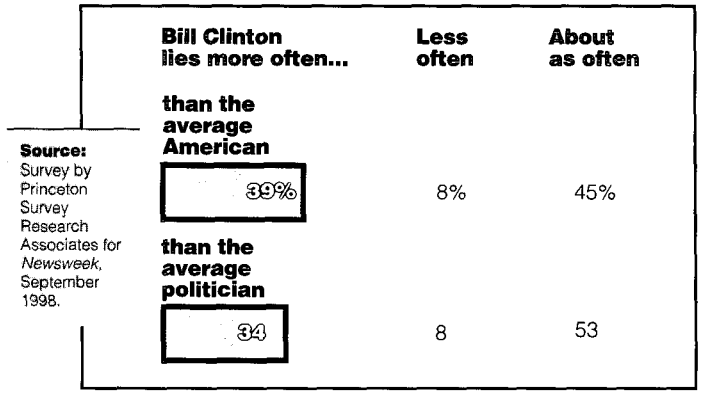
Note: In 1992 and 1994, the word "trustworthy" was not included in the question. When the question was asked more than one time in a month, the last asking is shown.
Source: Surveys by ABC News/ *Washington Post*, latest that of September 1998.

I'm going to describe some allegations being made about Bill Clinton. As I read each one, please say whether you think...



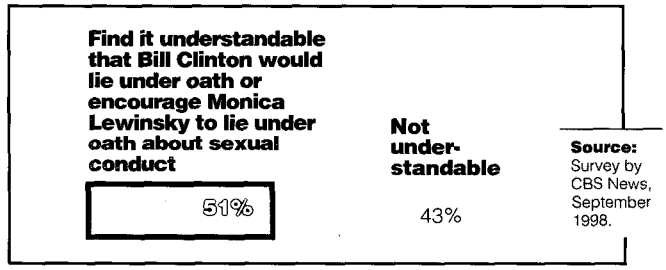
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of November 1998.

Do you think...?



Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*, September 1998.

Do you...?



Source: Survey by CBS News, September 1998.

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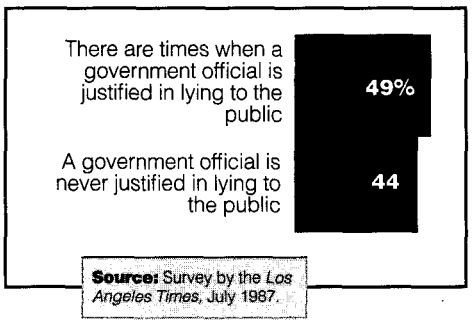
Lying by Government Officials

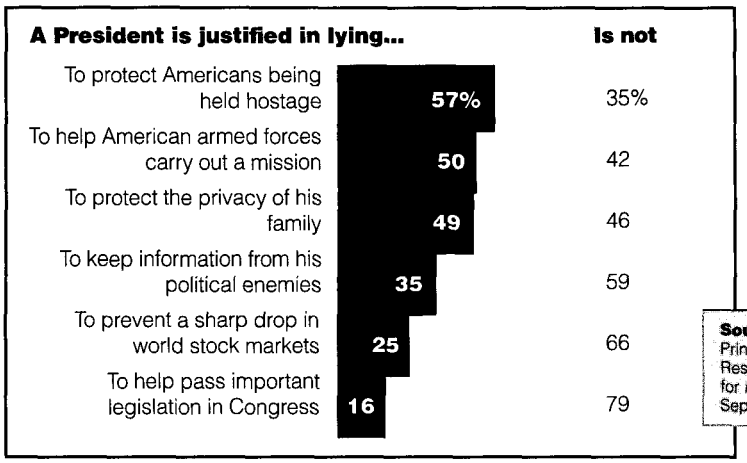
Americans are divided about whether there are times when a government official is justified in lying to the public. Majorities say it is acceptable for a President to lie to protect Americans being held hostage and to help carry out military missions. They are divided about lying to protect the privacy of a President's family. As the charts on the bottom of the page show, Americans have worried about the honesty of their fellow citizens for as long as pollsters have been asking about it. Only a small proportion, however, believe that people lie a lot to them.

Question: Do you think...?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, July 1987.

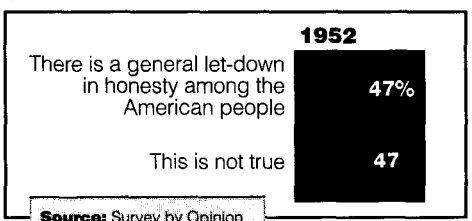
Question: Some people say that a President must never lie to the American people. Others say lying is justified under certain circumstances. Do you think...?



Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*, September 1998.

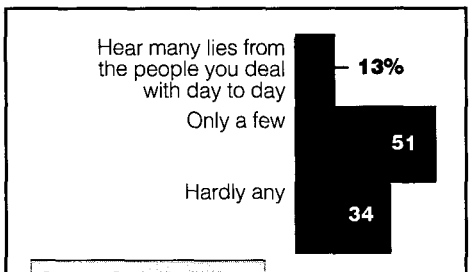
The Honesty of the Public

Question: It's been said...?



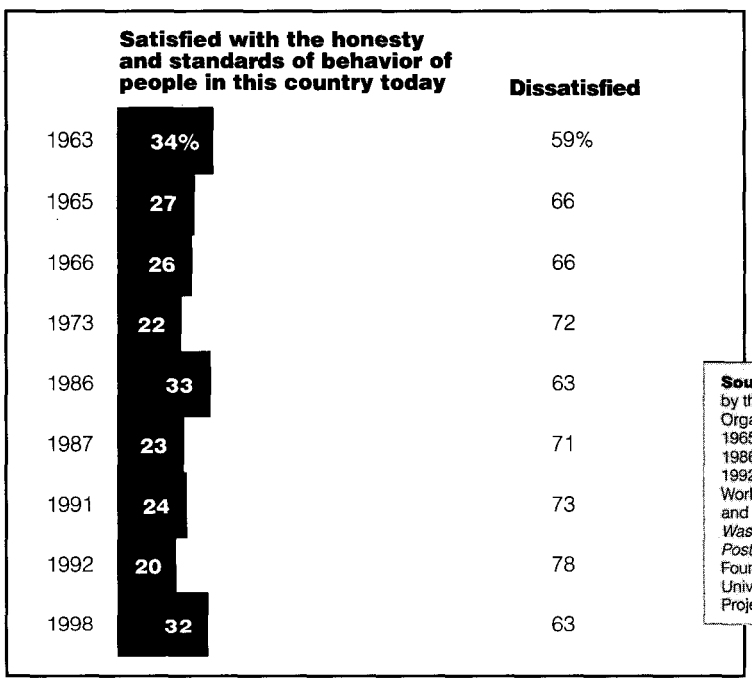
Source: Survey by Opinion Research Corporation, 1952.

Question: How often do you think you are lied to by people you encounter in your daily life...?



Source: Survey by CBS News, May 6–7, 1997.

Question: On the whole would you say you are...?



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization (1963, 1965, 1966, 1973, 1986, 1991, and 1992), Roper Starch Worldwide, 1987, and by the *Washington Post*/Kaiser Family Foundation, Harvard University Survey Project, 1998.

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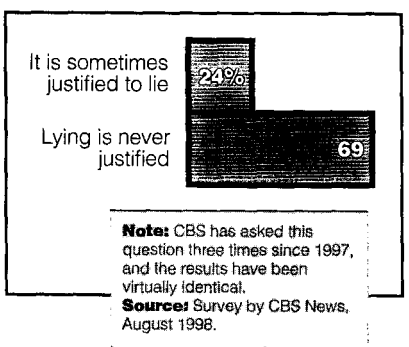
The Lies We Tell

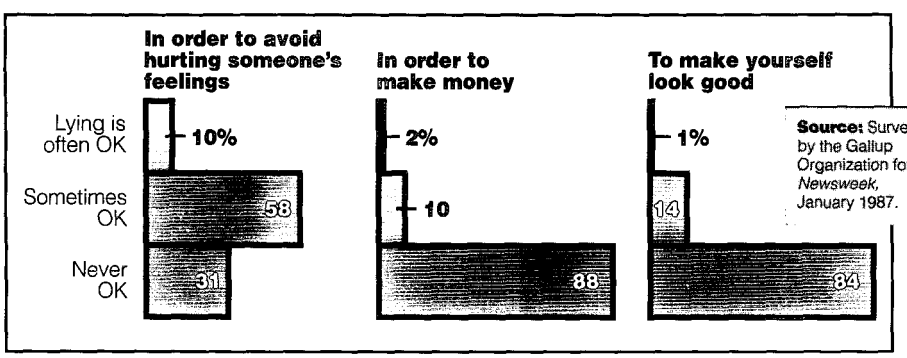
About a quarter of the public say it is sometimes justified to lie, though people make sharp distinctions about circumstances in which it is appropriate. Lying to avoid hurting someone's feelings is sometimes or often O.K., but lying to make money or to make yourself look good is not. Only 8 percent say they have lied in the past 24 hours. Four in ten have called in sick when they were feeling well, about the same proportion who say they have lied to keep a sexual relationship private. About two in ten say they have misreported their income or bent the truth on a job application. Gordon Black, whose data are cited on this page, asked respondents if they had lied in responding to his poll. Two percent admitted they had.

Question: Do you think...?



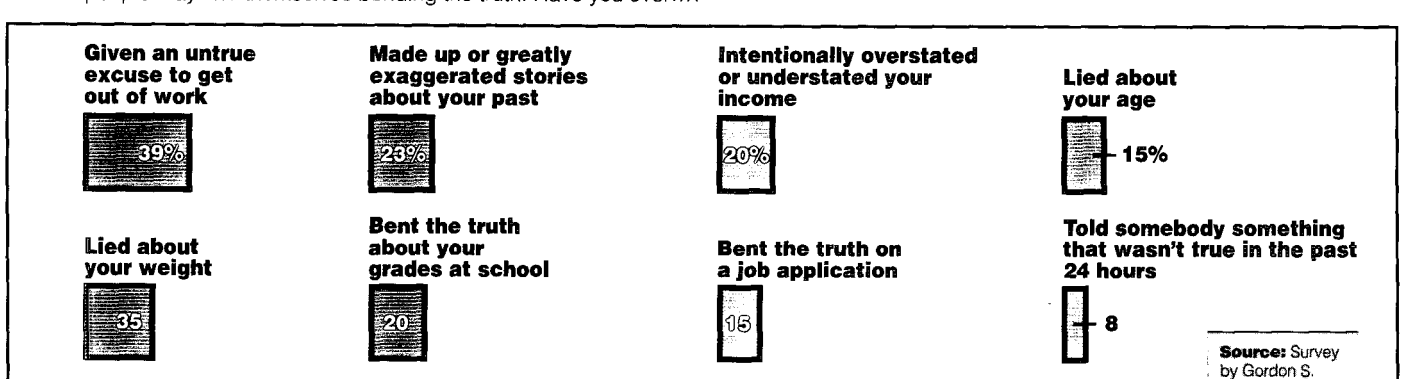
Note: CBS has asked this question three times since 1997, and the results have been virtually identical.
Source: Survey by CBS News, August 1998.

Question: Here are some reasons why people sometimes lie. For each situation, please tell me...?



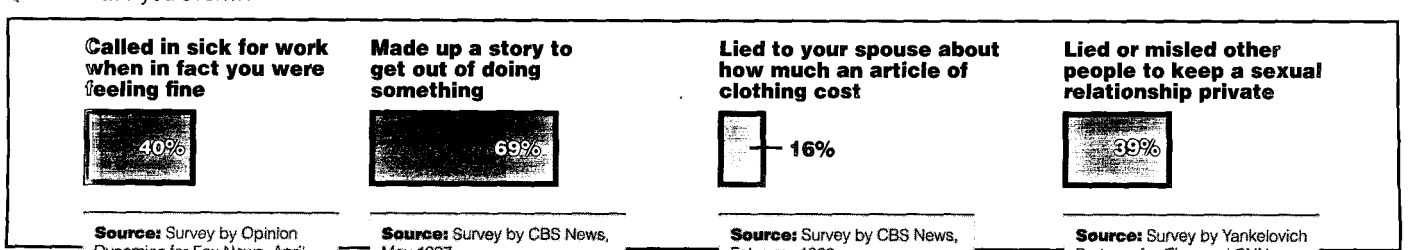
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 1987.

Question: The next topic we would like to discuss deals with occasions when people may find themselves bending the truth. Have you ever...?



Source: Survey by Gordon S. Black for *USA Today*, November 1986.

Question: Have you ever...?



Source: Survey by Opinion Dynamics for Fox News, April 1997.

Source: Survey by CBS News, May 1997.

Source: Survey by CBS News, February 1989.

Source: Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, September 1998.

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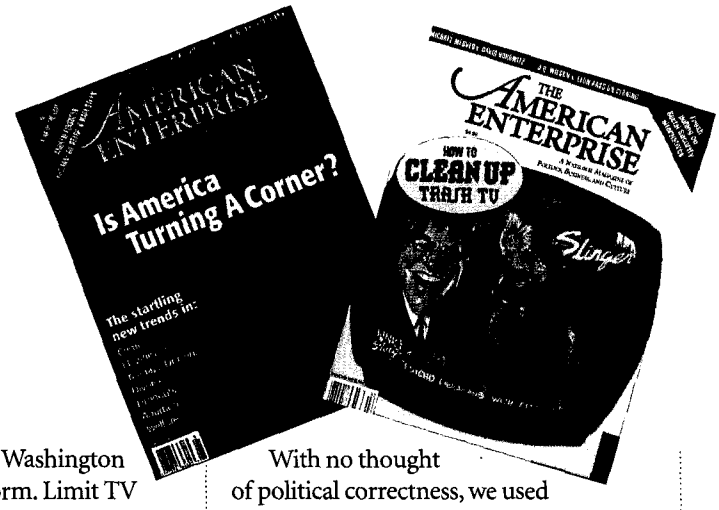
the Mail



TAE thoroughly disappoints me. All your articles conform to conservative dogma and lack independent thinking. I believe your magazine would benefit from self-criticism and introspection. I most certainly am not a liberal, but it's clear *TAE*'s tendency of putting a blanket condemnation on all liberals and their ideas is childish. This attitude only perpetuates partisan politics and counterproductivity. THE MAIL section only prints letters that praise your publication, none that disagree. I am sure many people have written intelligent letters opposing your views.

I have also noticed an indifference to poverty, human rights, and the environment. Since most of you are clearly Christian, I would point out that God cares more about the poor and the oppressed than about the flat tax and Republicans.

Ruddy Wang
Yale University

How can Karl Zinsmeister criticize TV if he doesn't own a set? (BIRD'S EYE, March/April) He sounds like a pseudo-intellectual liberal posing as a conservative. He also failed to mention soap operas, which contain more garbage than anything else on TV. Don't get me wrong: *I do not want any kind of censorship!*

Bob Pilcher
Lakehills, Texas

As pundits often do, Paul Cantor missed the point on Jesse Ventura ("Lets's Get Ready to Rumble," March/April). He attributes Ventura's election to television's ability to make someone a "celebrity." Actually, television aided Ventura's election because it gave people the opportunity to see and hear the sincerity he appeared to have in his beliefs.

The most important step in changing the horrible situation in Washington is campaign finance reform. Limit TV usage to straightforward shots of candidates voicing their opinions on issues. No attack ads against opponents, and no fancy production gimmicks making the candidate appear holier than thou. Just simulate a candidate's speaking live before an audience. In other words, let sincerity break through, if in fact it is there.

H. K. "Bud" Miller
Weed, California

What a refreshing change it was to read a balanced article supporting conservative Christians, instead of the far too common derogatory assaults in today's media. Thank you, Rabbi Daniel Lapin. Your "Why Jews Should Pray for a Christian America" (March/April) is right on.

Jane B. Raborg
Safford, Arizona

I read every word in your issue about race relations (November/December). I was born in a little tin-roofed shanty out in the country, in one of those Texas counties notorious for not having any black residents. Except for infrequent trips with a relative rich enough to own an automobile, my childhood was mostly confined to that little corner of the world.

During one such trip, when I was 12, I got a look at the city sights and first glimpsed real live black people. In short, Southerners like me didn't even *know,* let alone *dislike,* "colored people."

Decades later, after school integration, I began full-time teaching and found myself in the trenches of the race relations dialogue. It was a wonderfully enlightening time, both for me and for the 50 percent of my students who were still skittish in their newly assigned (white) school setting.

With no thought of political correctness, we used after-school sessions and extracurricular trips to dig into each other's cultures. They asked me why the (white) principal didn't like for girls to fight. I asked them why so many (black) girls were having babies. We discussed endlessly their reluctance to use proper grammar because they didn't want to sound "white." It was the same kind of natural, impassioned dialogue that continues today. Not the one mandated by the President, but one that defines our democracy through voices of diversity.

From that dialogue has emerged a new America: Black-owned businesses today spring up at five times the rate of new businesses as a whole; black entertainers top the charts; two-thirds of the white, rural voters in a Georgia district send a black congressman to Washington.

We have no reason to be discouraged by the dismal failure of the President's Initiative on Race, nor by the proponents of racism who find a bigot under every bed and make a living proclaiming that the melting pot is boiling over. Such people should realize our melting pot is slowly simmering on the back burner; that's the way flavors usually meld.

Rosemary Falls
Waco, Texas

The series of articles on mixed-race families moved my heart ("When Race Matters and When it Doesn't," November/December). This is a topic still very sensitive to most ears. Especially in light of recent court cases where children have been returned to their natural parents but have lost a loving home in the process. Marvin Olasky and Hendrik Mills both gave telling (yet different) tales of their experiences within mixed-race families.

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send to "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax to (202) 862-5867. Or e-mail TheAmericanEnterprise@compuserve.com. Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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These articles were further proof that race should never matter. We should wake up and realize that the American experiment is working, regardless of what we may think or see around us. When in doubt, look to the atrocities in Kosovo and remind yourself that we're doing a damn good job in America.

Edward Betancourt
Orlando, Florida

Bill Kauffman's November/December FLASHBACK ("The Atheist Who Played Peoria") does a disservice to the legendary Robert Green Ingersoll. Not once did the "Great Agnostic" refer to himself as an atheist. Nor does the GOP of his day bear any resemblance to the current Republican party held hostage by the Christian Right.

Most telling is an excerpt from the 1876 GOP platform: "The public school system of the states is the bulwark of the American republic; and, with a view to its security and permanence, we recommend an amendment to the Constitution forbidding the application of any public funds or property for the benefit of any school or institution under sectarian control." Evidently, the separation of church and state was clear back then.

Ingersoll's legacy deserves better than the shoddy treatment shown by Kauffman. Comparing "Royal Bob," with his charitable heart, to the self-serving Ayn Rand is laughable. He was an unrepentant Liberal Republican and economic conservative—not an atheist—to the very end.

William Osment
Kansas City, Missouri

While I read the January/February ENTERPRISING with great interest ("Recycling Is an Economic Activity, Not a Moral Imperative"), I noticed that you were fooled on the use of one illustration. The story of Neanderthals' recycling attributed to Oscar Todkopf (German for "dead head") comes from the April 1998 issue of *Discover*—it was the magazine's annual April Fool's story. A regular reader of the magazine would have known that. I'm sorry Messrs. Walker and Desrochers stumbled upon this story and mistook it for fact.

Jeffrey Jamison
via Internet

There is indeed a fantasy tax cut proposed by the Republican Congress (ECONOMIST, March/April). According to the 1999 federal budget, there was a $98 billion Social Security surplus for 1998. This surplus was used to balance the current federal budget. So when Congress and the President claim there is a $70 billion budget surplus, it means there would have been a $28 billion budget deficit without the improper use of Social Security's surplus.

Using this phony budget surplus, as Congress and the President have both proposed, is definitely a fantasy gift to taxpayers.

Joseph F. Vollmer
Colorado Springs, Colorado

While James Ceaser's book (reviewed by Martin Wooster, March/April) provides valuable criticism of current political culture, Wooster praises its most dubious claim, namely that the poisoning of American universities and the triumph of Nazism are both attributable to the "German connection." This connection is said to go back to reactionary German thinkers who despised American democracy and its "vulgar materialism" and who greased the skids for the Nazis and the American student radicals of the '60s.

In the interwar years European contempt for America's supposedly soulless way of life was hardly confined to the radical Right. It was probably more characteristic of Charles DeGaulle and other anti-Nazis than of Hitler, who long admired America as a frontier society.

Following an American snobbery, Ceaser (and apparently Wooster) believe moral and cultural corruption has moved in one direction, from the Old World to the New. Alas, during the last 30 years, Europeans and Canadians have taken over our political correctness, even to the point of duplicating our morally intolerable, government-led wars against the nuclear family. And the European political class has embraced not only our practices but also such unmistakably American ideologues as John Rawls and Gloria Steinem. It is *our* anti-bourgeois thinkers who are running riot in the Old World.

Paul Gottfried
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

NOW IN PAPERBACK

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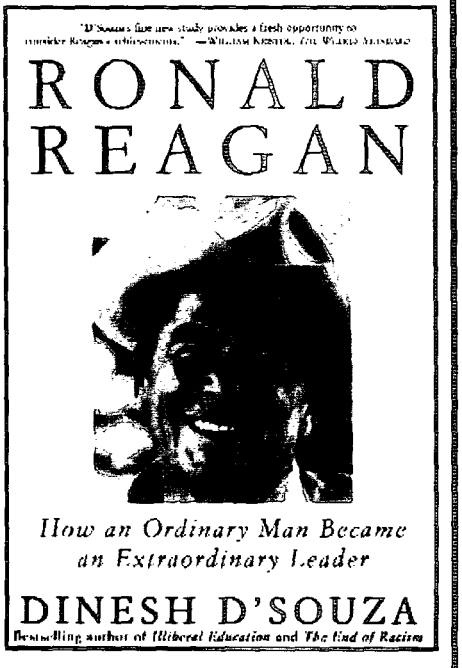
—David Gergen, Editor-at-Large, *U.S. News & World Report*



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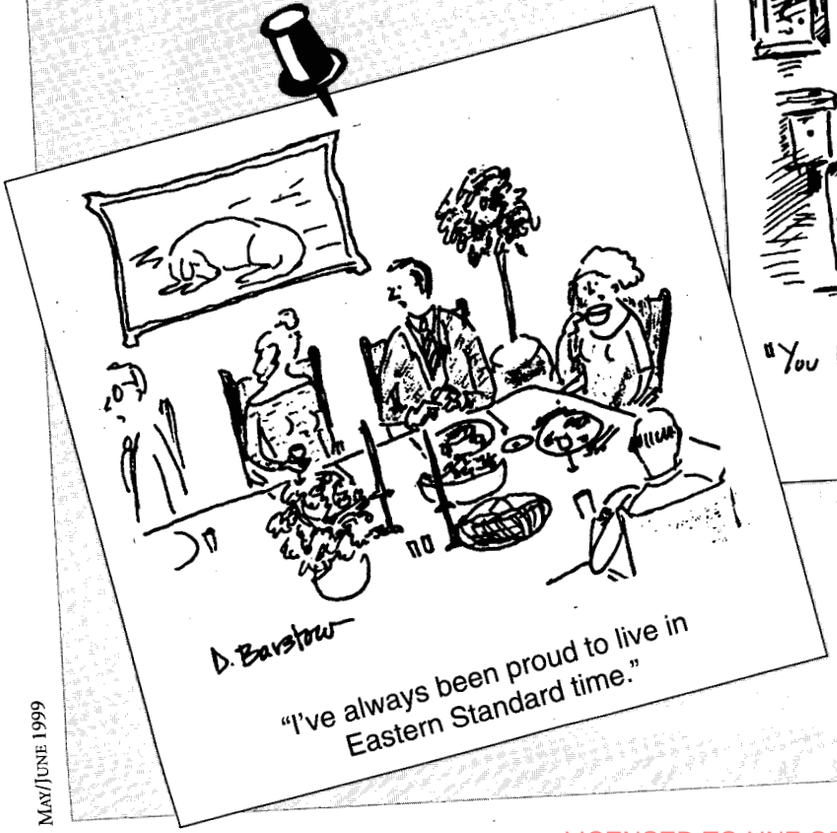

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FOR FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS. GAIN EXPOSURE TO AMERICA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL AUDIENCE—ON PBS.

Spring, 1999

To: Foundations and corporations

From: Ben Wattenberg

Re: Television opportunities available

Much valuable public policy research proceeds slowly, if at all, into the public debates and discussions that shape decision-making. Some research that does get into the mainstream is silly stuff. Mildly put, this situation diminishes the usefulness of research at a time when we need all the help we can get. Soon, Americans will be voting in an important election. As ever, surveys, sermons, spin and sound bites are at a premium. Even when candidates speak "on the issues" we get smoke.

Our company is deeply involved in trying to improve the transmission belt of public policy research and ideas into the intellectual and political marketplace, through public television. We bring to the public the best scholarship from right, left, center—and unclassifiable. I believe our panelists represent the best thinkers in America. Our programs are lively, interesting, civil, humorous—and provocative. Scholars speak American. No politicians, no journalists, no spinners, no food-fights.

We believe this kind of programming is of **particular value to foundations,** from every spot on the political spectrum, who often fund research that never sees the light of day. The PBS audience is larger by far than that of the cable channels. And decision-makers watch PBS.

We believe this kind of programming is of **particular value to corporations.** Decision-makers watch PBS.

Think TANK With BEN WATTENBERG

THINK TANK, a weekly discussion program, has produced more than 200 original programs with more than 300 different panelists. The program airs on stations across the country and on the PBS national satellite service. In Washington, where decision-makers live, it airs three times each week, twice on WETA and on WHHM (the Howard University channel.) A fourth play in is likely later this year.

Trends

TRENDS, is an annual prime time PBS documentary special. The 1999 program, airing in November, is "The Stakeholder Society." It explores the explosion in pensions—401-ks, IRAs, Keoghs, Roths, ESOPs, options—which have transformed the nature of being old in America, and transformed America, socially, economically, politically and ideologically.

THE FIRST MEASURED CENTURY, a three-hour documentary program, scheduled to air in 2000, in "core feed" prime time. It is a rich, colorful, visual, fast-moving narrative telling the story of this American century with a focus on data, not anecdote. It's been 100 years since the advent of systematic modern social and economic measurement. But most Americans still learn history as the story of Presidents, politics and personalities. FMC lets us know what happened to people.

Several themes unite all the projects.

1) They cover a wide variety of issues and ideas in the arena of public affairs.
2) While they are separate endeavors, underwriting credits can be arranged to appear on all three programs.
3) They are—typical of most public broadcasting ventures—underfunded.

Can you help us in these endeavors?

Sincerely,

Ben Wattenberg

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Help.

It's never too early to start planning for retirement. But how do you
if the financial decisions you make are the right ones? At CIGNA, we
how difficult this can be. That's why we created the Academy by CIG
workshops to help educate employees about retirement options so the cho
they make will be ones they can live with. At CIGNA we believe everyon
should just have retirement dreams, but the tools to make them real.

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